PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION.

PROGRESSIVE

EDUCATION,

COMMENCING WITH THE INFANT.

Albertine Adrienne

BY MADAME NECKER DE SAUSSURE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH:

WITH

NOTES AND AN APPENDIX:

BY

MRS. WILLARD AND MRS. PHELPS.

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PREFACE.

BY MRS. WILLARD.

In giving to the young mothers of my country a translation of this excellent work of Madame Necker de Saussure, I am happy to make an offering which will prove highly useful to such as are desirous of qualifying themselves for the wise and judicious fulfilment of their maternal duties. I have often been told, by my former pupils, who are now mothers, that they found it very difficult to satisfy their own minds with respect to the best mode of managing their little children; and an expression of my opinion on the subject has been frequently requested. I rejoice that infant education has at length been investigated by one so competent to do it justice as the author of this volume.

In my search after the best works on education, while in France, I owe much to the aid of Madame Belloc; from her I received this work; on examining it, I found it to be the very book so much needed by the mother and the Infant School teacher.

Madame Necker de Saussure is the sister-in-law of Madame de Staël, and was her intimate friend and

biographer. The two de Saussures, her father and brother, are identified with the history of literature and science. No woman of the age has enjoyed more distinguished advantages for intellectual improvement than she whose fortune it was to bear a near and intimate relation to so many gifted individuals; and she has consecrated the rich treasures of her mind to a noble object. Who that would be instrumental in doing good to the world, would not choose rather to be the author of her Progressive Education, than of the brilliant, but seductive Corinne, of Madame de Staël, notwithstanding the latter has been said to be "*the greatest work of the first female writer of all ages and countries?*" Scarcely her inferior in vigor of intellect, original genius, or acquired talents, Madame de Saussure possesses, what was wanting in the character of her distinguished friend, fervent and devoted piety. She is not a speculative believer, but a vital, experimental Christian. Hence, with the humility of her divine Master, she has said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

With a great deal of nature and simplicity, there is in this work much profound thought and argument. Mothers, in order to profit by it, must be educated: it is not written for the ignorant and uncultivated; such could neither comprehend its reasoning, nor profit much by its precepts. But, at the present day, and especially in our own country, females are so educated as to be capable of appreciating works of a high order.

The views of Madame de Saussure upon the faculties of the mind, more especially in relation to the in-

dependent agencies of the will, will be recognized by my pupils as coinciding with my own sentiments, so often expressed in my lectures on Mental Philosophy. I hoped to have found leisure for adding to the work more of my own reflections, and the results of my experience. Mrs. Phelps, who has so long aided me in the objects to which I am devoted, has contributed towards the Notes in the body of the work;—they may be considered as generally expressive of ideas which we hold in common upon the subjects to which they relate.

The Appendix, containing a Mother's observations upon her infant during its first year, will, I think, prove of much practical utility to young mothers. Having, myself witnessed the results of the system of management there described, in the patience, docility, and intelligence of the child who was the subject of it, I am enabled to bear my testimony in its favor.

Nothing can be more pleasing to the true friend of woman, than the sight of a well-educated female bringing all her faculties into exercise in the performance of the appropriate duties of her sex, as mistress of a household, as a wife and mother. To prepare the rising generation of women for these important duties, and to bring forward teachers to aid me in this, has been the grand object of my life. When I see powerful minds among my own sex rising up in support of the same object, I feel my heart encouraged and my hands strengthened to persevere. That the women of our own country are taking a higher rank in the scale of rational beings, is apparent, in the fact that

frivolous conversation and pursuits are giving place to such as are suggested by intelligence, benevolence and piety.

NOTE.—The Editors hope to present the public, ere long, with the remaining portion of Madame de Saussure's Progressive Education; and should she pursue the plan intimated in the following extract, we shall lose no time in giving to our country, a translation of the views of this able and accomplished author upon Female Education.

Extract of a letter from Madame Necker de Saussure to Mrs. Willard;—dated Geneva, July 21, 1834. (Translated from the French.)

"Permit me to express, Madam, how much I am delighted that my book has received the approbation of yourself and your sister, Mrs. Phelps, so far as to induce you to translate it. Your own works, which I have had the happiness to read, show to what enlightened judges mine has been submitted. In my second volume, as I have treated of a greater number of subjects than in the first, and discussed more contested points, the chance is greater that it may not, in all respects, accord with your ideas; but my sentiments in general so far harmonize with yours, that I can at least depend upon your indulgence.

"Since my last volume of Progressive Education was written, I have reflected much upon the education of women, and even began a treatise upon the subject; you may judge, therefore, how precious to me is this communication with you. Your experience is much more extensive than my own, which has been confined to private education. But the difficulty of writing on this subject alarms me; opinions

upon the destination of women diverge so far, and are so much under the influence of locality, that one can scarcely hope to produce a general impression, at least if the attempt be made to go beyond a mere common-place morality. It is very singular, that with sentiments essentially the same, and sustaining the common relations of wife and mother, women of different countries, and in different ranks, so little understand each other. The slightest diversity in custom, or received forms, renders them strangers to each other's hearts.

"We cannot even treat of the defects of our sex, without seeming unjust to the women of some countries, and appearing to point out those of others;—thus, our defects are not those of the French: if we go into Germany and England, we shall find those from which we are free, but at the same time qualities in which we are deficient. With us, a woman *shines* by prudence and an extreme circumspection; these entitle her to consideration, more than brilliancy of mind. Americans might find me too timid in my views of female education; while, at home, it might be thought I had gone too far; not that instruction, among us, is regarded with indifference, but it is desired only on condition that it produce no movement of the soul that may effect any change in real life. In France, *tout pris de nous*, the desire to emancipate women has become disorderly, striking at the root of all social institutions, and threatening the most sacred ties. At Lyons, is published a journal, edited by females, themselves, in which the principles are manifestly those of St. Simonisme.

"Mr. Martin has recently published a work entitled 'Education of Mothers.'—At first I supposed my labor performed; but though I find some interesting pages in the book, and that he requires of mothers many fine sentiments, still there are no definite counsels for their guidance.—Vague in religion as false in philosophy, there only remains to the reader the pleasure of having perused some very fine phrases.

"With much more satisfaction I have examined two volumes of the American Annals of Education, edited by Mr. Woodbridge. In this work I have found excellent advice upon the religious education of women, upon the care of health, and the development of the faculties.

"There are treasures in the soul of woman which yet remain to be explored and brought forward. This must be the work of an early, a thorough, and a judicious education."

PREFACE.

Numerous examples authorize, at the present day, the successive publication of different volumes of a work. This course seems naturally indicated, when one of the parts forms a whole by itself, as is the case in the present work: an important subject, that of the moral education of early infancy, is here found, not exhausted, indeed, but considered as fully as it seemed to require.

In a work which has for its object the progressive education of the whole life, this volume may be considered under a double aspect: it is a first part, destined to be soon succeeded by a second, which will complete what relates to infancy — and it is at the same time a separate essay; it is the study of a period of human existence, short, indeed, it is true, but perfectly distinct from every other, and replete with facts interesting to the observer.

There exists, indeed, between this period, and the portion of life which follows it, a line of demarcation not arbitrarily drawn, but which belongs to the immutable and necessary order of the development of the

individual. The child at the age of five years possesses all the intellectual faculties bestowed upon man: some of these faculties, yet weak and little accustomed to exercise, are frequently called into action by the most frivolous motives; and although expressed, as yet, only by insignificant actions, they are still manifested, and the child makes use of them in his own manner.

Before the age of four years, on the contrary, the child is a different being; it is destitute of reflection, one of the essential elements of human reason. Its mind, already very active, does not consider itself, and is unconscious of its own operations. Moreover, the instincts of the first age are yet with him in full vigor: its moral and physical nature are still composed, in a great degree, of the faculties bestowed upon the first period of life for a temporary and special object — endowments which we do not discover in after life. Thus, dispositions which partake of the mysterious nature of instinct, such as sympathy, and the tendency to imitation, soon cease to be noticed, either because they are, in truth, much diminished, or because the new development of the faculties, with which we are better acquainted, attracts our whole attention. Finally, when the child begins to use language, it is only as a means of external communication; his thoughts do not, without effort, flow in words, and he lives the same life of sensations and images, of desires and impressions, as that of animals, and newly-born infants. From this mode of existence, so different from ours, we infer that infancy is the only age which is clearly separated from the periods which follow it, these being connected to each other by inseparable gradations.

I do not mean to be understood that the peculiarities of the infant mind do not disappear gradually. The period from five to twelve years is an interval of transition, during which the instincts of the child become feeble in proportion as the faculties of the man increase. But these instincts exist in the mind of the individual, at a period when it is difficult to discover them. If, then, we neglect to study them when they alone prevail, we shall not distinguish them in a more complicated existence. One of the elements of the moral constitution of the pupil will always be unknown by us, if we have not observed the child in the first period of its existence.

Other considerations, still more weighty, will be joined to these, if we can be convinced of two truths; the one, that from the conditions imposed upon the soul at its first entrance into this world, the faculties which decide the formation of the character are those which are first manifested in the individual; the other, that education possesses an immense influence over the development of these faculties. This last truth is placed beyond a doubt by the schools recently established for children from the age of two to six years. In these we can judge of the happy effects that the principles by which I have been guided, produce in application. And if, on the one hand, the happy results which these institutions present, give the sanction of a more extended experience to the conclusions which I have deduced from facts observed in a narrow circle, — I venture to flatter myself, on the other hand, that these deductions will serve to explain, in a rational manner, the success of the method employed in these schools.

This hope is not entirely unfounded, at least as respects Geneva, where infant schools are at present forming. The remembrance of M. de Saussure is yet so vivid in his country, it is so well known that his zeal for public instruction here was equal to that displayed in his labors as a physician, that his daughter has some reason to hope to be listened to, when she speaks of education. This is one motive which has led me to hasten the publication of a volume which may, at this time, prove of important utility at Geneva.

In an introduction containing the plan of this whole work, I shall give some account of the views, by which, in its progress, I have successively been influenced.

While I undertook to trace the moral history of life, in pointing out, as far as I was able, the means of improvement which are adapted to its different ages, I designed to pass rapidly over the years of infancy.

Impressed with the great idea that our existence here is but the prelude to another, that our passage through the present world is only an education for another, I would view this idea in its various applications. Relying upon these words of Scripture, — 'All things shall work together for good to those who love God,' my design was to show that he who will avail himself of divine assistance, finds in every event, in the diversified interests which contribute to unfold our various moral faculties, the means of advancing towards his true destination. Without presuming too much upon the effect of my work, I have hoped to benefit myself, to find, in lofty thoughts, a support, a refuge

and consolation; to derive some advantage from the silent teachings of time, and to recommence, by my remembrances, the work which my life has thus far too little promoted.

At the first, my attention has been directed more to the results of life, than to that preparation for life itself, which should occupy the commencement of it; and the education of infancy was presented to me as a subject necessary, from my plan, to be noticed, but already exhausted by the distinguished writers who have devoted their thoughts to this subject.

But in examining this subject more closely, I have found much that is new, especially with regard to the first years of life. Philosophers have almost entirely disregarded very young children: instructers by profession do not often have them under their care; and when they are with them, they too frequently regard the future pupil as mere brute matter, destined to receive its value from them. They consider him an ignorant being, not thinking that, in order to arrive at the point where he is susceptible of rational instruction, the mental constitution of the child must be entirely different from that of man.

Females, on the other hand, quick to seize upon the slightest indications, and to comprehend the least intentions of children, are often satisfied with understanding them by sympathy. Their feeling is directed immediately to practical utility; and when a ready discernment has decided what will conduce to this, they consider it of little importance to arrive at general results. I was myself for a long time deeply occupied with education; but I had studied my children without

feeling that I was investigating the general principles of infant minds: all my observations seemed confined to the individual. The different systems of which I had acquired a knowledge not being able to satisfy me, I followed the guidance of the little experience I had gained, and what I believed to be good sense. But as this experience became more enlarged, as more leisure afforded me the opportunity to mature my reflections, I perceived the effect of general laws, in the uniformity of the phenomena presented by infancy. Perhaps, in describing them, the charm, attached to the contemplation of this age, has led me too far. But, either by the facts I have cited, or the conclusions deduced from them, I have extended the subject beyond my original intention.

Without abandoning my undertaking, as it is announced in the Introduction, I have gradually changed the proportions of it. Pressed by time, and by the advancement of the age, I have felt the necessity of reducing the dimensions of the part which first occupied most of my attention; and that which was designed to have formed two thirds of the work, will be little more than one third.

The first book is devoted to the exposition of principles which are applicable to every period of education. Nothing, surely, is more important than for the instructor to be fully acquainted with his own views, to demand of himself, in the first place, his precise object, since this is the best method of attaining that object. Yet, under these two relations, how numerous are the reflections presented! What a vast field of thought opens before us, at the simple contemplation of

that undertaking, so great, and at the same time so common—that of educating a child! The final destination of man, the obligations imposed upon him by the divine law, and the constitution of the present world, with the qualities which may render him capable of performing these obligations, become so many objects of deep and anxious contemplation. And when we consider what education is — that it is designed to influence the will, to impress upon the soul characters which will remain during life, we discover, not only that profound study of the human mind is indispensable to the instructor, but that he should be acquainted with the order in which the moral faculties are unfolded. It is not as an idle speculation, that such a study is presented: we see it to be the foundation, and even the essence of the art of education.

It is unnecessary for me to say that I have merely glanced at these great subjects. Guided by the sublime principles of Evangelical morality, I have endeavored to avoid all useless discussion; in applying my principles to human life, I have taken some points as agreed upon which are yet debated: but to support all my convictions by solid proofs, to resolve all difficulties, and remove all objections, would equally have surpassed the limits of my subject and of my powers. I have not affected philosophic coldness, but have expressed the feelings by which I was actuated, without exaggerating them, or indulging unkind expressions towards those who differ from me, and especially without allowing myself, in favor of the best objects, to allege reasons which seem trivial or doubtful. If I have ventured to touch upon lofty themes, it has been because

they were inherent to my subject, and have involuntarily commanded my attention; or they have pursued, rather than been sought by me. However the theoretical part of my work may be subject to criticism, I hope to have presented ideas which may be fruitful, in useful applications.

The second book is devoted to the study of the two first years of life — that important period, during which education is in a degree directed by vague ideas, since the child who does not yet speak cannot aid the observer in discovering what passes in his mind. But the discerning instinct of mothers, often penetrates the obscurity which involves this tender infancy, and furnishes important observations upon which to found our reasonings.

On the contrary, the period from the age of two to four years, the consideration of which occupies the third book, is the most instructive season for us. Then the new progress of the child, without having as yet changed his moral existence, serves to reveal it to our eyes; we then see the peculiar nature of infancy distinctly manifested, at the very period when it is about to disappear. The results of the facts relative to the soul during this period and the preceding, are considered in a separate chapter; and this concludes the history of infancy.

Hitherto, what has been advanced is only a collection of observations, and seems not related to the principal subject of the work, the formation of morality in children. But, for the interest of morality itself, I have thought it my duty to invite the instructor's attention to facts which have been the least regarded. We

begin to feel, that to secure the advancementof education, it is necessary to discover the physiological method ; or, in other words, to discover the laws of the moral development of the individual. But, without pretending to understand the essential nature of the soul, we may yet study the progress of the intellect from the birth of the human being. And, as a being immersed in total ignorance can attain a knowledge of the physical and moral world only by degrees, and in a determined order, we very soon discover that this order decides the development of the various faculties in the soul of the child. It is thus that the examination of facts always conducts to an explanation of their consequences.

Another benefit which we shall derive from the study of the infant, will be, to teach us more properly to estimate the endowments bestowed upon it by Providence ; qualities so adapted to its future destiny, that a moral constitution in any respect differing from the present, would have rendered him less susceptible of progress. In viewing him with regard to futurity, we see that many of his apparent defects—that even his weakness and his imperfect development, are the effects of a wise dispensation. He has the perfection of an ignorant being, a state the most favorable to be instructed ; and he has also the perfection of a dependent being, wholly unable to help himself, and a wonderful talent for obtaining aid of others. He can excite in us emotions of goodness, of devotion, and of constant affection, which we feel for none but him : he succeeds in inspiring us with a tender and heart-felt pity, and yet amuses and pleases us. Too improvi-

dent to be enslaved by his necessities, he has the grace, sometimes the pride of independence, and when he has received every thing at our hand, his friendship has still a disinterested air.* The immediate work of God, noble in view of its future destiny, and interesting in its present form, the infant presents at the same time a charming creation, and a perfect sketch.

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* Who has not, at times, felt the irresistible power of infancy to awaken tenderness and gentle affections! When the heart is sad, or seared by disappointment, it seems insensible to any emotions but of the most gloomy and despairing kind. Now like a beam of light glancing athwart the darkness of midnight, does an infant's smile kindle up an involuntary cheerfulness, and provoke the sternest features to return an answering expression. The widowed mother, as she clasps her babe to her bosom, feels the apathy of grief to be succeeded by a softened emotion, and as she raises her supplications to the Father of the fatherless, is inspired with the wish to live for her child, and the resolution to nerve herself, for his sake, to encounter the storms of life, in a cold and unfeeling world, where there are few to care for those who need to be cared for. [Ed.]

INTRODUCTION.

My design is to represent the progress of life, and the feelings which animate us at every period of it: I wish to describe the changes which time produces in us; but this is not my only object. As the noblest aim of the study of the human heart is to soften it, I desire to seek the means of rendering our dispositions more exalted and more holy, more favorable to the tranquillity of the soul, and the display of its activity.

It is the history of the soul, especially, that I propose to trace; a history less different in various individuals than that of their external condition, but of much greater importance. The changes which our souls experience, have for us the nature of real events. Upon the state of the heart, depends not only our own happiness, but also the train of events that the desire of gratifying our inclinations may produce. The most unforeseen determinations, are not to be ascribed to chance; for they have been preceded by desire.* Thus, by indulg-

* This is a most important suggestion, and ought to be impressed with great care upon the minds of every young person,

ing in certain thoughts, we unconsciously weave the web of our future destiny. The succession of our feelings, is the confused sketch of the drama which is afterwards represented in our conduct.

All, then, is education in human life. Each year of our existence is the consequence of years that precede it, and the preparation for those which follow; each age has a task to perform for itself, and another in relation to that which succeeds it. And if, in proportion as we advance in life, the perspective of life itself seems to narrow before us — if it seems less necessary to prepare for a career always diminishing, there is a point of view the reverse of that. There is an interest which increases with years. The less the time remaining to us to live, the more valuable does each moment become, in the view of the Christian. He who aims to win the prize of the race feels his courage and hope redouble as he approaches the goal.

Infancy, indeed, differs from other ages, in many respects. There is a time of weakness, and inexperience, when the newly-created soul acquires its first notions of things, and is brought into intercourse with an

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particularly females. To the susceptibility of their hearts, and an unrestrained license of imagination, are to be ascribed much of the misery which many of our sex endure. Surrounded by attentive friends, watched over by parental tenderness, and enjoying all the refinements and luxuries which wealth can purchase, many a female has been left to muse in secret over a hopeless passion, which might have been checked in its beginning — or has been induced to marry a man in whom neither moral or intellectual endowments made up the want of worldly goods. In poverty and degradation, she must realize that *by indulging in certain thoughts, she did unconsciously weave the web of her destiny.* [Ed.]

unknown world; it then sustains no responsibility; the care of its education is not confided to itself: but, if the work of education consists in the development of the faculties, we cannot assign to it any definite period. The mind is always capable of being enlarged, and the heart of being softened; even religious feeling, the most elevated of our sentiments, has a tendency to increase, by exercise. All the springs which act upon the child, have power with the man; outwardly, circumstances and events; inwardly, those feelings which prompt us to love and to hate, to imitate, to hope and fear, exert a continual influence upon our souls. How then can we assign any boundaries to the extent of education? The character and the mind are constantly receiving modifications; this is what renders education always possible; not only is it possible, but unavoidable: some species of it is incessantly active: to know if we can direct it, is the only doubtful question.

The development of the character does not, it is true, depend entirely either upon the will of instructors in infancy, or upon that of the pupil at a more advanced age; but does it follow from this that these wills have no power? Because we have not every thing at our disposal, does it follow that we can influence nothing? Many causes, it is true, act without our knowledge, and against our wishes; but there are regular and beneficial influences which are at our command. It is because there is at all periods an accidental education, that it is necessary to balance the effects of it by one which has been premeditated.

All the power given to man in education, depends

upon the exercise of his will.* This power is, in my opinion, great; and it is for this alone that man will always be responsible. The transient influence of instructors should establish the durable empire of conscience, and give a permanent direction to what is most variable with the child, and remains fluctuating with man — the will. If, then, there exists a source, where the will may become invigorated, whence it can derive the assistance necessary to sustain, enlighten, and direct it, and to reanimate it when sinking into apathy, it would seem that the great object of education is to render the access to this more easy to the human being in the successive periods of his life.

After having described the first years of life, when

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* There is a vulgar opinion prevailing among some parents, that a child's '*will* must be broken,' as the expression is; but it should be understood that the *will*, *resolution*, or *firmness* of purpose, all of which are nearly synonymous terms, is in fact the very stamina of the mind. It is indeed necessary that a child should very early be taught obedience, and to know that its own wishes are not always to be gratified. For this end, should he prove refractory, punishment of some kind should be resorted to, until he is made to submit to authority. Yet in doing this, a very young child may be made to understand, by an affectionate, though decided manner, that his own good only is intended; and thus, though his spirit may be subdued, it will remain unbroken. It is painful to think of the manner in which some parents and teachers govern the young and tender minds committed to their fostering care. Insult and ignominy are heaped upon the defenceless being, as ungovernable passion or mistaken views of discipline may prompt, and either a sullen obstinacy, a morbid melancholy, or a servile abjectness of spirit, takes the place of that ingenuous frankness, that playfulness of disposition and noble independence which are so lovely and interesting in the young, and which are far from being incompatible with a character submitted to a judicious discipline. [Ed.]

education, with some slight differences, is the same for all children, I shall revert to the peculiar character which should be given to the early education of females. Indeed, it will be their education that I shall principally consider in the whole course of the work. I can more easily speak of them, both because I know them better, and because the contemplation of their destiny is better suited to my design. The domestic relations hold a more important place in their existence; and hence they are more subject to the influence of natural events. As they embrace no particular profession — as they are neither merchants, soldiers, or magistrates, the natural dispositions are more apparent in them; they are daughters, wives, and mothers, more than men are sons, fathers or husbands. Observe the young female, desirous of rendering herself lovely, — she who is on the eve of marriage — the wife, jealous of her husband's affections — the mother, solicitous for her children — and you will find the same sentiments influencing the conduct, and acting upon the heart, from Lapland to Peru, from the slave to the princess. The difference of age are also more marked in females. A man who has embraced a particular profession, goes on, during his whole life, through nearly the same routine, and the uniformity of his actions affects also the state of his feelings. All the interests of woman, on the contrary, change with years ; her position in society changes also, and it becomes more easy to mark the influence of time upon her life.

Another reason which leads me to address myself to females, is because they will listen to what I say. Having no public profession, they usually mark out,

more or less judiciously, a sort of moral career; each one conceives a certain ideal excellence, which she seeks to reach, and by which she directs her course. Her thoughts and opinions are little concealed. If she is ignorant of many things, she at least does not boast of knowing every thing; and the want of positive knowledge is more than compensated by the desire of acquiring it. The education of her children which devolves upon her, leads her to aim at what is best for them and for herself: all advice upon this sacred subject is gratefully received; and the observations that she is continually making, as a mother, increase her taste for mental analysis.

But, if I more particularly address myself to women, I would not be thought to do it in an exclusive manner. A religious point of view renders the condition of the heart important also with men. As Christians, the domestic relations become to them of great importance: increase of years gives to life a new character of gravity; and the great idea of a future existence, causes the distinctions of wealth and rank to vanish.

The tendency of this work will, I trust, be religious: it is not a book of mere amusement, since the observation of life, such as it is in reality, is presented here; and the spirit of Christianity, it is hoped, pervades it, although its doctrine be not frequently alluded to. Not, however, that I regard the doctrine as indifferent. If the devotion of the heart is of the first importance, the religion of it is not the least essentially founded upon a belief, and the nature of this belief influences that of devotion itself, and of a multitude of other opinions. But, sincerely attached to Christianity as our illustrious

reformers* have viewed it, I consider here its effects, rather than their cause. I appeal to that feeling which ought to be common among Christians, to that boundless charity which esteems the name of tolerance towards brethren; implying, as it does, the existence of something wrong to be tolerated, as weak, and even injurious: I appeal to that charity, the exercise of which, though sometimes difficult, is indispensably necessary, and which consists in allowing to all the right which we claim, to think and judge for themselves.

This varied work, the author has not the vanity to suppose will, in a religious point of view, prove instructive to persons eminent for their piety. These seem to me too elevated to need assistance from me. They have access to a higher source than human counsel; and even of human counsel, of a kind better than my book can give. I address myself especially to a class unhappily much more numerous; to those who, without being ranked among the adversaries of religion, do not comprehend the Christian language, who do not read the holy Scriptures,† or those books which give a

* The circumstance of Madame De Sausure's belonging to the Protestant Church, renders the tone of her work more in unison with the feelings of most Christians among us than it probably would otherwise have been. It is true that the pious and amiable Fenelon wrote much that is delightful to the heart of the Christian, much that may seem to improve the female sex; but still there is interwoven with his sentiments something of that peculiar mysticism which belongs to the Romish church, and in his advice to young women, with a low estimate of female abilities, appears also a superstitious adherence to the contracted tenets of his church. [Ed.]

† It must be here recollected by the reader that the author writes in a country where infidelity, and the influence of the

faithful interpretation of them. Ignorant as they are of the most important resources, the difficulty is to make them feel their need of them. We scarcely

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Romish Church have both tended to the disuse of the Scriptures. It is scarcely possible for us to realize the ignorance of the Word of God which prevails in many parts of those countries denominated Christian; thick darkness, with respect to every thing spiritual, broods over the souls of millions who are within the very sound of the gospel, and superstition and scepticism seem to unite to hold the soul in bondage. Take for example one instance among thousands; a girl of eighteen, who has recently arrived in this country, from Catholic Ireland; quick in her conceptions, intelligent in every thing which is placed under her observation, she is wholly ignorant of all which the Bible teaches, except in those particulars where her priest has thought proper to enlighten her, in order to secure his own influence. In attempting to teach her to read, the word Noah occurred. She was asked who Noah was; the answer was she did not know.—'Have you never heard of the flood by which God once destroyed the earth?' She had not — 'Did you never go to school in your own country?' 'I did not, but I learned a little to read of a good Protestant lady, who told me to come to her house; — she had a school for the poor children of the place, and wished me to go to it. I went to the priest and on my knees, asked him to permit me to go to this school of Lady C—; he said, No, I must not be taught by any but himself, and that it was sinful for me to learn, especially from the Protestants.'

The same girl was for some time afraid to attend family prayers, because her priest had told her that there was no religion out of her own church, and that heretics and all who had any thing to do with them, would be eternally miserable. She also suffered much dejection because she had not access to a priest to whom she might confess; for, according to their faith, Roman Catholics can only hope for forgiveness and favor from God, through the intercessions of their priests; of course, when cut off from intercourse with them, their souls are exposed to eternal perdition. How blessed is that religion which teaches us that none can forgive sins, but God only, and that his ear is ever open to the cry of the penitent! [Ed.]

know how to effect this; for, so long as we are not able to give them, in the only language which they understand, a taste for divine truths, they will be like those barbarous people who never emerge from their condition, because they do not conceive themselves to be deficient.

But I chiefly address myself to those whom I regard more immediately as my equals; I speak to those who are impressed with the truth, the beauty, and primary importance of Christianity, but wish to connect it more closely with the various objects of interest, which we cannot, and ought not to banish from human existence. These, feel that religion is every thing, or nothing; that if it does not become an absorbing principle, it is an empty profession; but they find a difficulty in making universal application of such a principle, so numerous are the objects in this world, which, in the course of life, have a lawful, and even a useful place, and yet seem foreign to religion.* The education of the heart may present the means of doing this, since, considered with regard to religious perfection, there is no action or occupation indifferent; every thing is injurious or useful, every thing retards or favors our progress. We

* How often does the heart of the true Christian sink, in view of the trivial concerns which demand his attention, and even duties which seem to have a deadening influence upon his piety! but such is the state in which our Heavenly Father has been pleased to place man, for the very purpose of trying him. If every thing incited him to piety, where would be the Christian's warfare? But the real spirit of religion inwrought in the soul will not only carry us safely through all temptations, but turn them into occasions for spiritual improvement and growth in grace. [Ed.]

should observe the effect of objects upon us, instead of considering them as they are in themselves; and, repelling every thing which removes us from God, we should seek to approach him by every pure and elevated means.

Having spoken of the design of this work, I proceed to state its plan.

It treats of premeditated* education ; that is to say, the education which aims to take advantage of the influence of men and things, for the perfecting of the individual. This education should continue during the whole life, and only change its agent : although this may be different, the work itself remains the same, and, from birth to death, there is always a subject to be perfected.

Considered in this light, life is naturally divided into three periods.

During the first, which embraces the period of infancy, education is directed by minds superior to those of the individual who is to be acted upon.

During the second, which includes the period of adolescence or youth, and that portion of it, which the law subjects to parental authority, the pupil should more and more aid in his own education.

Finally, during the third period, the individual having become the arbiter of his own destiny, is himself called to labor for his own perfection.

The first of these divisions of human life, is that

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*The expression 'premeditated education' seems rather foreign to our idiom, and yet when something the opposite of accidental education is meant, as is here the case, it is difficult to substitute a better. [Ed.]

where a writer on the subject finds his course the most distinctly traced. In considering infancy, he cannot do otherwise, than to address himself to the instructors who have undertaken the direction of it; and accordingly education, properly speaking, or the cares of which children are the object, become the subject of which he should treat. But this subject would be too vast, either for my plan, or my abilities, should I attempt to consider it in its whole extent. Obliged to limit myself, it will chiefly be the formation of the character which I shall principally consider. I shall not dilate upon methods of teaching, but in the general views upon the development of the mind which I shall have occasion to offer, shall especially consider the moral effect of the various occupations and different studies which are commonly pursued.*

Yet the rules which I have imposed upon myself in this work, required, from the commencement, an investigation of the human heart more profound than that of which infancy has heretofore been the object. Books upon education ordinarily contain the history of the thoughts and experiments of the instructor relatively to his pupil, rather than the history of the pupil himself, and of what passes in his mind. The latter is precisely what I have endeavored to discover. After having, in some general considerations, indicated the views which the instructor ought to take on the subject of his duties, I devote my attention to the child; — I seek to know

* The author here refers more particularly to what she designs to do in her future volumes on progressive education, than in this, which is devoted to a consideration of the first years of life. [Ed.]

his feelings during the entire period when an imperious necessity subjects him to our power ; and this examination leads me to infer that the majority of the impressions attributed to caprice and unreasonableness, in infancy, have a higher origin. The conditions to which the soul is subjected upon its entrance into this world, furnish, I think, a sufficient explanation for many feelings which infants experience; and I also recognize in them the effect of a dispensation eminently favorable to the development of the noblest faculties. I then attempt to describe the moral constitution of the child at different ages, and deduce the practical results which these observations clearly present. This order, the most natural of all, is not however the only one which I have observed. Certain dispositions should be cultivated before others, either because they are fugitive, or because they may facilitate the whole work of education. Principles must be established before consequences are deduced from them. There is then a moral and logical connexion, independent of the order of facts, but not less essential to follow.

After observation and its consequences, there will generally follow the exposition of a truth which seems particularly applicable to the age I am considering. When the changes produced by years shall lead to corresponding changes in the consequences of this truth, I shall present it under a new aspect. Thus we shall see the same principles differently developed in the successive periods of education.

This blending of observations, of theory and the application of their results to infancy, presents great difficulties in execution. Arising from it, are too frequent

and strong contrasts, and too sudden transitions. Nothing is apparently so frivolous and trifling, as details concerning little children, as the whole mass of facts presented by that age; nothing, on the contrary, is so great, so difficult, or so obscure, as the study of the faculties of the soul. Yet how can we separate these two elements of education? Shall we attach sufficient importance to the form, often very insignificant, under which certain faculties are presented in the child, if we do not consider them in relation to their future importance? Should we fail of seeing the future in the present; — the ripened wheat, in the blade of grass? Should we not even keep in view the point from which we set out, and that to which we would attain, infancy and manhood? If the apparent changes of tone and of object seem, in a literary point of view, less striking than a different method, this must not tempt to deviate from what I consider essential to the subject, and most important to consider. Perhaps with a superior tact I should have avoided these dissonances; but to neglect to say things which I believe useful, I consider a greater wrong than to state them in an imperfect manner.

When the pupil has arrived at the period of adolescence, we see him beginning to aid in the work of his own education. He comprehends and adopts the best design with regard to it; he approves the means of promoting it, and chooses or appoints them. His parents preserve all their right over him, but by degrees they lose their power; their authority would no longer exert a salutary influence, if they were obliged to use it. All should be confidence at first, then complete and familiar persuasion. Their moral influence requires

the more careful management, as it will very soon diminish, and as this period often gives a direction to the whole life.

It is not easy to employ judiciously, this precious and fragile remnant of a decaying power. Observation is often rendered useless, by sudden changes which are produced in the character of the pupil. We know him no longer,* and he has little knowledge of himself. He is sincere, but every moment deceived, both with regard to himself and every thing about him. His ardent and flexible imagination always places what he believes to be, in the place of what really is; the combat of hopes with possibilities is as yet little felt by him, and he lives in an atmosphere of illusions that nothing has yet dissipated. Ignorant of the extent or limits of his faculties, of what his will can, and what it cannot accomplish, he is by turns confident and desponding.

While this state of fluctuation still continues, and the youth is assailed upon all sides by new passions or temptations, the hand which had guided him seems insensibly withdrawn, and he is often cast alone amidst

* How true is this observation! how often is the parent to whom the heart of his child had been as an open page, suddenly dismayed by finding its inscriptions concealed from his inspection, and the being whom he had led and influenced without the appearance of opposition, bounding from his grasp, and gone, whither he cannot follow him! That is, his affections, desires and pursuits seem changed, and an impenetrable veil now shrouds the internal processes of thought which are going on. The parent must, in season, foresee that his passive child will become the self-centred man, and so wisely improve and wield power, while in his possession, that the man shall recognize as his *friend*, the guardian of the child. [Ed.]

the dangers of the world. Yet such is the ascendancy of principles which may have been inculcated by a good education, such is that of the pure and generous feelings which may have been easily inspired at an earlier age, that not only shall the young man escape the dangers which surround him, but form anew those virtuous resolutions, the accomplishment of which will occupy his future life.

The variety of interesting objects which rise to the view of youth is so great, there is such a crowd of new feelings and thoughts, new ideas and impressions, that it is extremely difficult to analyze and describe the condition of the subject of education at this period.

Whatever else I may omit in this limited sketch, I shall at least consider the essential object, religion, and shall endeavor to show how important it is, during that short interval, which, with females, separates infancy from marriage, to give to future mothers principles of piety.

The remaining part of the work will consider the successive occasions naturally presented to adults to promote their own perfection. The young man is hardly released from the yoke of parental authority, when a strong feeling leads him to resign at least a part of his liberty, in uniting the destiny of another to his own. Until this period, his only concern had been for himself. The object of the devotion of his parents, he had entered into their views, while he attended to his own interests, and labored to store his intellect with knowledge, and his soul with virtues. With the feeling of an artist, he had viewed his own character as a work which he was to accomplish, and considered that noble

and generous qualities were to be its crowning ornament; — but *self* was always first in his thoughts. He desired that good should be done, but that this good should be effected by himself, and considered particularly the part which he had performed upon every occasion. Hence that species of self-conceit which so often renders young persons disagreeable.

It is impossible without a strong moral power for nature to be subdued, and the bonds of selfishness unloosed. Such a resolution is often reserved to the power of paternal love, and perhaps this feeling only is capable of entirely effecting it.* By means of this sentiment alone, man learns to know true affection, that entire consecration of soul which does not expect a return equal to what it gives, which looks for no happiness like that which it would procure for the object of its attachment. At this period, I shall again direct my attention to children, not as being themselves the object of education, but as educating, so to speak, their parents, because they place them in a situation where every interest and every feeling concur to make them sensible of the necessity of morality, and of its most certain source, religion.

Then terrestrial existence has received its most extensive development, when the soul has formed its greatest number of relations with other beings. An useful member of society, still a son, and already a father, man perceives the various branches of his duty

* *Quere.* Is parental love more generous, devoted or self-sacrificing, than that which subsists between the sexes in its highest and purest form of conjugal affection? [Ed.]

to be widely extended ; and he animates a sphere of activity proper to the nature of his faculties. Yet he soon discovers that these faculties have their limits. Illusions are dissipated by his being perpetually brought into contact with real things ; his external influence is increased, as a certain ardor diminishes ; the repetition of the scenes of the world extinguishes the vivacity of his impressions, and his interest in life for himself, somewhat abated, passes more and more into that of his children ; and upon them his imagination fixes with new hopes and new illusions.

But these children, in the course of their life, do not fully satisfy his expectation ; they may very soon stray from home, and at last become entirely separated. It is the same with a thousand objects of lively interest; the esteem and gratitude of others, or some good which we had hoped to effect. Every thing decays, is withered, or fades in the distance. We perceive that affairs move on without us, and we become detached from others and from ourselves.

But the pious soul, possesses more than the compensation for the loss of the fascinating charms and illusions of youth. In such an one, the great sense of duty survives all, and gives its possessor an enjoyment and activity independent of worldly thoughts and objects. The invisible world appears, in proportion as the visible world vanishes from his sight, and his hopes rest upon the only Being who can never deceive him. A greater degree of elevation and of tranquillity, and a more just appreciation of objects, communicate to him a new and entirely different species of greatness. He now understands why he was sent into this earth, and the plan of human life is unfolded to his understanding.

He perceives that, placed upon the earth in order that his faculties should be expanded, he is not destined to remain connected to the objects which have served to unfold them. His new powers aspire to a new exercise. The understanding would be elevated to a higher contemplation than that of terrestrial objects, and that ardent affection which had been called forth by imperfect creatures, now seeks to fix itself upon the only perfect Being ;—thus his development is not suspended ; his advancement, though less apparent, is more real, and less liable to interruptions.

His contemplative faculties gain more than his active powers seem to have lost, and his higher destination may already be manifested in this life. Thus, in old age a more entire disinterestedness, a more constant serenity, an undefinable something of wise, tranquil, and heavenly, seem to surround his venerable brow with the anticipated glory of immortality. Thus are exemplified those beautiful words of Scripture, 'As the outward man decays, the inner man is renewed.'

It is indeed a strong proof of our immortality that this principle of advancement always continues to exist in our soul. And as the action of this principle is necessarily arrested in advanced life only by the decay of corporeal organs, that is to say, by an obstacle which may be presented at any other age, it is clear that the state of decline towards the close of life, is entirely unconnected with the nature of the soul, and that it is no argument against the possibility of an eternal progress in the extent of its faculties.

It is true, this progress demands the concurrence of our own will. Those who do not penetrate beyond the

exterior of things, remain during life occupied with vain appearances, and education has not in them accomplished its design. Time not only fails to elevate, but it corrupts them. When this is the case, there will be a perfection of selfishness instead of devout and holy sentiments. Then, the heart becomes more and more withered, and the desires more and more debased—the personal happiness to which the egoist* had attached every thing escapes from him, since he has become insensible to the noblest enjoyments, and no others continue. For him, old age is truly desolate. To his terrified imagination death seems indeed the king of terrors, and perhaps even more appalling than annihilation: but it is painful to dwell upon such a picture.

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* Egoist from ego *I*, has no synonime in English. It means one occupied with *self*, hence *egoisme*, selfishness. [Ed.]

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION.

CHAPTER I.

THE DESIGN OF EDUCATION.

"To desire virtue for the pleasure it affords, is to fall into epicurianism."—FENELON.

To bring up a child, is to place it in a situation to accomplish, in the best manner possible, the destination of its life. But what is the general destination of human life? Upon the answer to this question, evidently depends the entire direction of education. We are far from having determined this direction, when we say that education has for its end the development of the faculties; this is its work, rather than its end.

Education does develop the faculties: if it proposed to itself nothing else than to give to the pupil the means of existing here below, it would still develop them. At Senegal, as in England, certain qualities are cultivated; but what qualities do they favor with the preference? In what sense will be that increase which they would always give to the human faculties? And as the least difference of proportion in the elements of which we are formed, influences the nature of our moral constitution, it is neces-

sary to be acquainted with the destination of a person, in order to decide what he ought to do.

The ancients considered happiness the end of human existence. Supreme felicity, was presented to them under forms, sometimes noble, sometimes more or less sensual; but an idea of seeking it has always existed. Even in our own age the attempt is made to revive this kind of philosophy. Under the equivocal name of utility, some pretend even to consider the desire of happiness the foundation of morality. But the prominent and sublime feature of Christianity, is to have set before man a more elevated object than earthly felicity.

What says the Christian religion in its sacred language? It tells us that, with divine assistance, man can in this life begin to revive in his soul the effaced image of the Creator; and that if he complies with the conditions of the gospel, conditions whose performance has a constant tendency to purify his heart, the great atonement offered for his offences, ensures him eternal salvation, or a union with God in another life. This doctrine is only perfection promised as a reward to those who seek to perfect themselves.

An order of ideas so elevated belongs naturally to the source from whence it is derived. We could not ask more from a divine revelation; and we ought not to expect less. What is perhaps most astonishing, is, that so many persons of superior talents, virtuous characters, and noble souls as have in all ages honored humanity, have not considered that to assign to man happiness for the sole object of his existence upon earth, was to corrupt the moral sentiment in his heart. Indeed, all the attempts to identify felicity and virtue, have not deceived mankind. Neither the noble fiction of the Stoics, that vice alone is an evil, and that grief is not one; nor the less elevated assertion

of the *Utilitarians*, that our duty is always conformed to our interest, can sustain examination. However philosophers may attempt to elevate happiness and lower morality, there is always a difference, often an opposition to the ideas which they would confound. Reason, experience, cool reflection, the emotions of the heart, all tell us that to satisfy conscience, it is often necessary to renounce the idea of being happy; they tell us, that if unhappiness is inevitably attached to vice, happiness is not, in this life, always the reward of virtue.

It would seem, that such philosophers have taken the means for the end. The desire of happiness is one of the motives which leads us to develop our faculties, and by which we advance towards the true end of our existence. But to understand one of the causes of our actions, is not to know our final destination. A person ignorant of the use of a watch, who should attentively regard the interior of one, might comprehend its mechanism; he might conceive where resides the moving force, and how it produces action; but would he know that this complicated work has for its object the measure of time? This is the secret of the inventor, and a person unacquainted with his views would not discover it.

Thus should we pronounce upon the end of human life, while limiting ourselves to consider the mechanism of our actions. But if we view the result to which the course of life will bring us, we see that the supposed end is not accomplished — happiness is not obtained.

And, moreover, this is only one of the causes of our actions. Who can deny that the love of right is also a feeling natural to man — that justice and truth seem his element? What being is so abandoned of Heaven, as not to feel under a moral obligation, as not to know that in this world he has duties to perform? This is truly a law of

the soul, which is always admitted by the reflecting mind, which, though we may transgress, we dare not deny its obligation. The other law is, so to speak, only a physical propensity, like gravitation in dead matter. It is a force which acts upon our senses, upon those of our inclinations which are at their service; while the liberty, and glory of man, consists in the power of resisting this impulsion.

But why should we weary ourselves to lay a foundation for morality, by proving its necessity? Morality! a universal basis which all suppose, upon which everything rests, without which there would exist, neither society, language, or human beings. What logic is in reasoning, what are the mathematics in the exact sciences, morality is in the system of our existence: primitive truth, co-eternal with God, the expression of his infinite perfections, it is manifested in the works of his hand. Man has received its impress; its features disfigured, but ineffaceable, always appear in him, notwithstanding his vices, his wanderings, and his false systems. Thus, when Christianity shows him the moral law, most excellent, most holy, and most severe, and at the same time most merciful, it is no sooner offered to his view, than he thinks not of it as a discovery, but recognizes it as the law written upon his own heart.

If we descend from this height, we shall find that common sense commands us not to propose felicity for our object, since we know not what it is. The end and the road which leads to it are equally unknown, and the very idea of happiness is wholly indefinite. The ancients were never able to agree with regard to the nature of the supreme good; and perhaps it is not in the power of man to define it. Reason tells us what it ought to be rather than what it really is. Imagination, more free in its flight, cannot

even figure it to itself, with any permanence; and when it would represent it, a sort of insipidity is attached to its creations. Experience, so instructive, teaches nothing decisive with regard to it; for what do facts tell us? That with every imaginable advantage, a man may yet be very much to be pitied, if he does not possess a certain thing called contentment of mind; but that is to say, that to be happy, we must be happy. So that when we wish to define happiness, we are always obliged to have recourse to synonymous terms.

If we express ourselves with a severity, which is not much allowed in ordinary usage, we shall perhaps find that there is something false and contradictory in the idea which we are obliged to form of happiness. That it be a situation free from trouble, we do not say; but, since a desire not satisfied is a trouble which the imagination can magnify at its will, we are obliged to say that it is a state where all our wishes are realized. But, this state would in time become very tedious. There would then be no motive for action, and our powers would remain dormant. We have faculties which require to be exercised, and the office of imagination is to create some desire capable of calling them into action. We are formed, then, to possess desires and wishes; this is for us the state of moral health. Our souls flow forth in wishes, as the sap of a vigorous tree extends itself to the branches. There is no happiness without activity, no activity without an *end;* and whoever desires an object, desires that which he has not yet obtained. Supreme earthly felicity would then be a state in which we want something, which is absurd.

But if this word has not an absolute sense, it takes one by comparison. Our condition can be improved; the feeling of existence can be rendered more animated and more agreeable. When does this take place? It is when

we believe ourselves to be approaching towards the accomplishment of a desired object; it is when the moral feeling is kept alive by hope. The most desirable objects of that hope contain in themselves the germ of others; they transport the thought beyond their possession. The learned are intent upon discovering some truth which shall throw light upon a more general truth; the charitable man sees in the good which he at present dispenses the commencement of a much greater good. There is always a future in the enjoyments which answer our expectations. If it is otherwise, the pleasure of having obtained them does not repay for the trouble of seeking them.

Happiness, such as we can conceive as existing on earth, is not then a fixed situation; it is a progress; it is a state in which a mild and regular excitement is sustained in us by hope. When we advance towards the accomplishment of a well-chosen end, we enjoy in anticipation the moment of its arrival, and at last have the real enjoyment of this moment. But if there does not proceed from that some other interest, some new aliment for the activity of the soul, our situation is not much improved.

The art of being happy, is then the art of dispensing hope through our whole life. The most enviable situation is that in which we have prospectively a succession of ends, all so accessible that we can proceed with calmness and confidence, but of which the most distant are the most worthy of our desires. We then seem to lose none of our steps; we support cheerfully the fatigues of our voyage, and the future is presented to our view under a smiling and favorable aspect.

It is to be remarked, that the greater part of the occupations of life are formed after such an idea. We see in them an increasing progression, in such goods as riches, esteem, glory, and power, which deserve the name of

goods, provided they are not esteemed beyond their proper value. And when these occupations are in subordination to the most elevated of all vocations, to that which offers the greatest of all possible advantages of progression, the Christian vocation, they undoubtedly present the elements of happiness. But such occupations offer only precarious compensations, and are not open to all, especially to females; and as physical nature often proceeds in an inverse progression, passing from evil to evil and from degradation to degradation, it is of infinite importance for the human imagination, which is prone to anticipation to figure to itself a succession of hopes.

But if we would obtain contentment, we must not perhaps have happiness in view. Those who, in pursuing their various occupations, have gathered in their journey through life all the happiness which it can afford—those, I say, have not proposed happiness as their end. They aspired to some object more precise, more definite, to which, if it had been necessary, they would have sacrificed happiness itself. It is thus that they proceed on their pathway through life. Not only is the search for happiness illusory, but it retards us in the pursuit of what is valuable.

In fact, the impossibility of forming to ourselves a clear idea of happiness, is the reason that our imagination substitutes pleasure in its stead. We represent it to ourselves as valuable, notwithstanding its fugitive nature: there are in the immense treasures of nature and of art, many things calculated to delight the senses and the heart of man; but unfortunately, these objects are not always within our reach, and when they are, the pleasure they afford is evanescent, or themselves are perishable. Then the desires most difficult to satisfy, are the most inconstant. The great rewards of perseverance are lost, and we at last become disgusted with every thing.

Besides, the pursuit of happiness renders us more sensible to the evils of life; since there is a peculiar bitterness in disappointment, inversely proportioned to what we expected. The habit of referring every thing to self, of consulting our own desires, is to nourish egoism, that unjust master who is never satisfied with the exertion we make to serve him, and who thus disturbs the whole of our existence. Nothing of an earthly nature, when closely considered, can fully satisfy the soul. The way to increase the griefs and diminish the pleasures of life, is to keep an account current of both.

These considerations are, however, insufficient, and he who should limit himself to them would fail in justice to the subject. If the search for happiness is idle and vain, it is not for that alone that we should renounce it. We do not condemn it as a road which leads to evil, but as a road which, if it does lead to some good ought not to be followed. The principle which holds duty in subordination to utility, is bad in itself, independently of the consequences which result from it. The will of God, or, in other words, the moral law, ought not to occupy a secondary place in our heart; it claims unbounded empire, and although it be true that we find it our interest to submit to this law, yet we ought not to give this as the motive of our obedience.

Let us rely upon the disposition of the supreme director; he has not neglected the care of our happiness. The objects necessary to our preservation and enjoyment, have been spread with profusion throughout the universe: the inclinations which lead us to these objects are deeply rooted in our very constitution. Involuntarily, we desire pleasure, and terrestrial joys: we ought to possess in the will a counterpoise to all these instincts. Otherwise, we should be incapable of resisting them. If I pursue hap-

piness, from an instinct of my nature, when it is evidently contrary to the spirit of the moral law, am I guilty?

It is said, I know, that for the desire of happiness merely, it is often wise to sacrifice the present to the future. It is, surely, a very good thing to counsel us to prudence; but without relation to duty, prudence is a quality of no moral value, and is often an obstacle to good as well as to evil. Should we ever know remorse, if we had only to reproach ourselves with having neglected our own gratifications, or of having made too low an estimate of the value of pleasure? Does not an unconquerable feeling tell us that our interest is the only thing which we have a right to sacrifice?*

Those who wish to give to the system of utility, a character of grandeur and elevation which it does not possess, say, that it is a question of general good, and recommend morality, because it is advantageous to society. It is well to recommend it, but the means of enforcing its observance fail altogether in this doctrine. Once suffer the principle of utility to be, as they would have it, substituted for conscience, and how can we expect an individual to sacrifice himself for the public good? They may say, that the interest of each individual is conformed to that of society: but if we do not believe it, if even, setting conscience aside, we have frequent reason not to believe it, why shall we submit ourselves to their judgment? They may speak to us of duty; but if they have set aside conscience, who will listen, or obey them? No law, but the moral law,

* It is certainly questionable how far we have a right to sacrifice ourselves. God has given to each of his great family the care of one being, that is, of himself—and if he neglect this one, or inflict upon him unnecessary pain, or deny him reasonable gratifications, is he not unfaithful to his trust? To *have right*, as well as *to do right*, seems to be the duty of each individual. [Ed.]

proceeding from God, can be imposed upon us. However imperfect be our nature, an equivocal rule is always repugnant to it. Man is weak, inconsistent, and corrupt, but he has nevertheless an elevated idea of virtue, and if the divine light is little manifested in his conduct, we do see it shine forth in the loftiness of his conceptions.

Is it then true, as is pretended, that the two opinions upon the end of human life, apparently so contrary, are, in reality only the same opinion, and that they both have happiness for their final end? Is it true that those who have for their object virtue, or perfection, only prefer one kind of enjoyment to another? It is always easy to confound things; but it appears to me that those who reason thus, have not been close observers of human nature. Without dwelling upon the grand examples which history affords, without citing those devoted heroes who have had no other prospect than suffering, no other hope for themselves than death, I would say, that the attentive examination of what passes even in our own souls will lead us to another conclusion.

I do not apprehend that when a person enters upon a career of painful duties, he forms to himself, clearly, one joy in the future. He submits to an obligation without appeal; he obeys an imperious law, without thinking whether any happiness will ensue. The calm region of duty is superior to that of hopes and fears; there are not felt those fluctuations, which are the effect of the unequal appreciation of pains and pleasures; all is constant, absolute, and of an enduring nature: — it is not the enjoyments of virtue, which the good seek, but virtue; it is not the consolations of religion that they desire, but God himself, and in conformity to His will. This region which seems so elevated, is yet accessible to souls which are strangers to all the refinements of philosophy and learning, while

that in which a person can enjoy the sacrifice of himself, is much less accessible; for; to find a charm in the idea of self-devotion, requires a kind of elevation rarely found among men, and inconstant even in those who are susceptible of experiencing it. The great and sublime emotions excited by the most elevated sentiments, do not fall to the share of all mortals; age weakens them, misfortunes destroy them: they may be the reward, they are not the pure, and unalterable essence, of attachment to our duty. In this world such sentiments are connected with enthusiasm; in heaven they will be calm and lasting.

We must now return to the double nature of man. The contradictory results which are offered in the complex study of the human heart, can never be explained, if we do not admit that we are actuated by more than one motive. And since in the physical world all is opposition of forces, why should we expect to find in the moral world but one principle? There are in us two laws, as St. Paul has said;* our feelings, experience, and reason, bear witness to the same. While some instincts, necessary perhaps in the physical order, but blind, and urging us forward in pursuit of pleasure, develop our faculties, we feel that our faculties, and even life are only designed to elevate us to a superior situation, and to restore degraded humanity to its primitive rank.

To say that religion itself proposes in the future, eternal happiness for our object, would be to enter upon an order of thoughts entirely different. On this occasion, as in others, the sacred writers have employed the received expression, and the reason of this is obvious, since all the ideas which they give of future rewards, are necessarily connected in our mind, with great happiness. The senti-

* Romans vi. 23.

ment of existence, is so sweet, that immortality, joined to an exemption from the disquietudes and evils of life, must appear to us a very happy condition. But in the imperfect images which direct our hope, the idea of enjoyment never occupies the first place, while that of a more pure and elevated state, always does. Sometimes '*it is a crown of glory that fadeth not away*,' * '*an exceeding and eternal weight of glory*,' † '*the inheritance of the saints in light*;' ‡ sometimes '*particpation of the divine nature*,' § '*a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*,' ‖ '*the heavenly Jerusalem, enlightened by the glory of God*.' ** The word glory is constantly employed here, and since this word often signifies the progress of the Christian in holiness upon earth, since we see that the faithful, 'are transformed from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord,' †† it would seem that the recompense is of the same nature as the means by which we are called to obtain it, and that the regeneration commenced in this life, is to be finished in another. Religion thus confirms and sanctions, under the most expressive forms, that law of one immortal soul, which obliges it to become perfect.

Rigorous and imperative in the domain of morality, such a law governs equally all the faculties of the soul. The mind rises towards truth, the imagination towards beauty, and the conscience towards virtue.‡‡ The whole

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* 1 Peter v. 4. † 2 Cor. iv. 17. ‡ Colos. i. 12. § 1 Pet. i. 4. ‖ 1 Pet. iii. 13. ** Apocalypse xxi. 11. 23. †† 2 Cor. iii. 18.

‡‡ It is desirable that Metaphysicians should be able to fix some certain meaning to the words *mind*, *spirit*, *soul*, &c. But while some contend that *mind* is a generic term, including all of man that is not *matter*, others would make the mind serve as a connect-

spiritual being receives an impulse. Why should we have been deprived of unerring instinct, the prerogative of inferior creatures, if Heaven, to make amends for our constant errors, had not endowed us with an irresistible desire for perfection. The want, the presentiment of a better state, are the instinct of man. He constantly examines, revises, and corrects his works, his instruments of labor, and his means of acquiring knowledge. A hope which is never realized, is not however entirely deceived: he arrives at improvement, although he does not attain perfection; his fate is to desire more than he can attain.

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ing link between the body and soul; considering that the soul is the spiritual and immortal part of man, while the mind is connected more especially with the senses; that mind is common both to brutes and men, while the latter only possess souls. All this seems to be encumbering Mental Philosophy with useless and absurd distinctions. Matter is one thing; mind, spirit, or soul is another. Respecting the latter, we know only its operations, and surely these operations do not of themselves constitute a new class of *substances.* We call the various changes which take place in matter, gravitation, affinity, &c. and the changes which take place in mind, reasoning, loving, &c. We divide matter into various classes, as minerals, plants, &c.; and we consider mind as susceptible of an arrangement into the will, understanding, emotions, &c. The necessity of insisting on some third term to apply to the brute creation, seems unnecessary, since, while we allow to them, some of the properties of mind, especially such as produce sensations, with even some of the higher powers, which seem to exist in certain tribes of animals, we perceive them incapable of moral distinctions, and therefore destitute of that element of mind which is necessary to fit it for glory and immortality. The poet who exclaims, '*Mind* alone, bear witness earth and heaven! The living fountains, in itself, contains of Beauteous and Sublime,' seems to be fully of opinion that there is nothing more spiritual and more elevated than the mind itself. Returning then to the Author's expression, 'the mind rises towards truth,' or we would substitute for mind, understanding, considering the three terms, understanding, imagination and conscience as orders of the mental faculties which constitute the mind. [Ed.]

The desire for perfection, is that which education ought assiduously to cherish. To excite, preserve, and regulate it, is its most sacred task. And as the greatest degree of happiness with a rational being can only be found in the path of his true destination, instructors will just so much better attend to the interests of happiness, as they will cause to prevail over the other desires of the pupil that of becoming perfect.

Education ought then to be suited to our double destination; it ought to prepare the child for two successive existences. Behold an immortal mind, which is here to be fitted for eternity, and a weak creature, sent into the world to suffer and to die!

The constitution of our nature is adapted to these two conditions. The soul has faculties fitted for its abode on earth, and it possesses those which bear its views and hopes beyond it. Both ought to be developed by education. Since it is not the will of God to call us immediately to himself, and as he has obliged us to seek him in our journey through life, it is the duty of the instructor to provide the child with what is necessary in the voyage.

But that life is a voyage, that it is only the swift progress towards eternity, is an idea which ought to be attached to every period of our existence; it is what should always be kept in view, and what, in my opinion, is not sufficiently expressed in the various definitions usually given of education. It is supposed to consist in bringing the youth to a certain state, rather than in implanting a disposition, which shall make him, at a future day infinitely surpass that state; and yet, as the greatest moral and intellectual development, in childhood, is nothing, compared to what we expect in mature age, it is much more essential to give it this disposition. The progress already made is of much less importance than an inclination to make further progress; so that it is less necessary

to inquire with regard to the degree of advancement which the child has already made than with regard to the disposition it manifests for the future. The nearer a pupil approaches to the general level of society, in respect to knowledge or religion, the more easily can he persuade himself that he has nothing more to acquire upon these subjects, and may relax his efforts, thus stopping at mediocrity, unless some new stimulus is added to renew his vigor.

This is why so many educations, apparently well conducted, produce insignificant results. This is the reason why so many minds disappoint our expectations. When there is no internal excitement, all very soon withers and falls to decay. Not to increase, is to decrease; not to advance, is to go back; thus is it with human nature. If there is within us, a principle of restoration, there is also a principle of decay. We must exert ourselves, in order that we do not descend, and this can be done only by endeavoring to rise.

According to Kant, the end of education would be this: '*to develop in the individual all the perfection of which he is susceptible.*' But as such a work cannot be accomplished in childhood, and as it requires for its achievement the entire existence, I would propose a slight change of this fine definition: *to give to the pupil the will and the means of arriving at the perfection of which he will one day be susceptible.*

This supposes in the instructor some idea of the perfection to which he may aspire, and, moreover, a knowledge of the causes which act upon the will. This will be the subject of the following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE IDEA WHICH THE INSTRUCTOR OUGHT TO FORM OF PERFECTION. URIM AND THUMMIM, LIGHT AND PERFECTION. (GENESIS) SYMBOLS OF THE MOST HIGH FIGURED UPON THE BREASTPLATE OF THE JEWISH HIGH PRIEST.

PERFECTION, that noble end of education, of life, is not to be found upon earth any more than happiness; but we are much less liable to wander in its search. Even while ignorant of its nature, we can always approach nearer to it, since the road which leads there is well marked.* And, if in proportion as we advance our strength increases, if we soon gain a better climate, and breathe a purer air, we shall not fail on our journey, of either encouragement or reward.

It is necessary however to form some idea of what we wish to obtain; and what idea can we form of perfection, since we have never found it, and even our imagination cannot clearly represent it to us? How can we do this, as, in examining each object, we judge it constantly inferior to that veiled image, which seems to us to soar above ourselves, and all things about us? This judgment can only be the result of a comparison, for which we seem to

*Or, to express the same idea in the beautiful and expressive language of the Scriptures, 'The way-faring man, though a fool, need not err therein.' [ED.]

want one of the terms. Some general considerations will perhaps aid us in the elucidation of this question.

We do not inquire here with regard to that sovereign perfection which is called *absolute*, to show that it is susceptible of no more increase, an idea which can only be understood to apply to God. Indeed, the excellence which seems to us to constitute perfection, is of a nature to increase without limit. Whatever grandeur may be assigned to intelligence, strength, and beauty, we can always add to it one degree more. It is in the region of infinity, that human thought loses itself, and perceives there can be nothing greater or more perfect. It is then relative perfection only which we have to consider.

In this life an object is accounted perfect when it is what it should be; that is to say, when it fully answers its destination. At the moment of creation, the Almighty assigned to each of his works its destination, and in this sense, all beings, which answer to the views of God are perfect. Yet as some are endowed with properties or faculties, of which others are destitute, there appears to us a sort of hierarchy, among created beings. We attribute to them a rank proportioned to the grandeur of the qualities which they display, or to the importance of their destination, and this rank seems to determine the degree of their relative perfection.

Yet it is not always easy to estimate this degree; it would be necessary for us to know the grand outline of the plan of God, in order to decide what place, each object ought to occupy, the link which connects it to other objects, and the qualities which these relations demand. The contemplation of nature, doubtless reveals to us some of the designs of God. We see the heavenly bodies accomplish their revolutions in fixed periods,—the seasons succeed each other regularly, the various species of plants and animals maintained and perpetuated,—order, motion,

and life, preserved throughout the universe. The whole is too regular, the dependence of the parts too intimate for the perfection of the whole, not to answer to that of the parts. But how far are our vague ideas from the exact knowledge even of each piece of the grand mechanism. Not only are we without any ideas of what nature ought to be, but we cannot distinguish exactly what it is, when presented to us in reality. Our superficial observation stops before it arrives at the essence of bodies; and one of the most interesting of all subjects, the organization of living beings, remains to us a profound mystery. We imagine however that we discover gradually the perfection of the works of God; but we cannot judge of them; his works, as well as himself, surpass in every respect, our narrow views, and we can only approach the vestibule of his conceptions.

But when called to appreciate the works of man, the same disproportion does not exist. There the artist and the judge are upon a level, and the one has no faculty foreign to the other. Yet even here, the uncertainty of our ideas confuses us; and we know not clearly enough what ought to be, to pronounce respecting what is. We understand in general what effect an artist has wished to produce, but we are ignorant whether he has taken the best means to succeed.

We review his plan, we remodel it in our mind; and only perceive the defects of our inventions, when we come to put our theory in practice. But, through the darkness which obscures our mental vision, we almost always discover two species of imperfections; one in the first idea of the workmen, and another in the execution of the work; such are the sources of imperfection profusely spread over human productions.

If we wish to remove at least one of these sources, we must leave the region of the fine arts, and enter the humble

domain of mechanical arts. There, in the representation of geometrical figures, which answer to the most precise notions of our mind, we can be sufficiently near to see perfection realized. If, for example, I demand of a workman to construct for me, in metal or ivory, a sphere, a cylinder, or a cube, as I well know what I have in view, if the execution of that object is regular, I have nothing more to desire. Nicer organs than mine, would perhaps find defects in them, but as I am formed, I do not see them, and I pronounce the work to be perfect.

A decision so favorable, leaves me, it is true, completely cold. It is an act of judgment which has only the character of approbation, unaccompanied with admiration. But in this inferior perfection, we can seize upon the most important element in the idea of perfection. In all which falls under the province of judgment, reason ought to give its full and entire approbation. And, as there are some qualities which reason has a right to require in all objects, as she very well knows in what these qualities consist, and as the notions which she has of them, without attaining altogether to mathematical precision, are among the number of those most clear to our mind, it is essential that relatively to those at least the conformity of what is, with what ought to be, should be complete. Thus in material works, the adaptation of means to an end, the just proportion and intimate connexion of parts, the duration, and utility of the object are among the number of obligatory conditions. There are qualities correspondent to them in the moral domain; so that if we give the name of *regularity* to the whole of those qualities which are attached to our notions of order, and which are to be judged by reason, we shall say that regularity is the first and indispensable element of perfection.

But this element is not the only one; there is another, which, wherever it can be found, is equally necessary.

Perfection, in itself, supposes a combination of all excellencies, and there are kinds of merit which judgment alone does not appreciate. All is not reason in man; feeling, and imagination, have their rights. We wish to admire; we cherish this sweet and grand emotion, and beauty is the natural subject of admiration. We desire both moral and physical beauty, and when the obligations imposed by duty are fulfilled, we then ask for these. Here, is presented an element, infinite by its nature, constantly susceptible of a greater degree of development. And from this it arises, that our desires are insatiable, and that the only perfection which can satisfy them, seems always to escape us.

What is beauty? A question insolvable, perhaps, or which at least has never yet been solved. We have never discovered the common characteristic of the various objects which excite our admiration. They charm and fascinate us, they suspend for a moment the monotonous course of our existence, they transport us beyond the earth and from ourselves. The effect which they produce upon us sometimes unites them in our thoughts; but the link is not in them, it is in our soul.

What resemblance can we find between what are the most simple of all things, a brilliant or delicate color, and a melodious sound, and the immense complication of objects, which the magnificent aspect of nature presents to us? And yet the rapid and fugitive impression of such a color and such a sound, as well as the more permanent effect of a landscape, obliges us to exclaim, It is beautiful! What is this power of moving our souls possessed by terrestrial things? What is this indefinable charm, mysterious blessing of our existence? Is it an anticipation of another state of being, a reflection of celestial splendor, an echo of the harmony above? Is it an impulse given to the soul, destined hereafter to contemplate infinite beauty?

And this rapture mingled with a soft melancholy, is its use to remind us that we are only pilgrims on earth? There is in this a proof of goodness which we cannot misunderstand.

In order to distinguish ideas often confused, we observe that regularity is not a condition necessary to beauty. It becomes such if we require perfect beauty; but then the idea is not the most simple, and we form perfection by combining the two elements which constitute it. But if we seek to separate them, in taking for the sole character of beauty, the power of exciting admiration, we see that the sentiment can be more easily inspired. A child is presented to our view, and we are charmed with its dazzling complexion, and the brilliancy of its eyes, while perhaps its features will not sustain examination. The finest points of view in nature present nothing regular. And in the moral world, where order is represented by duty, how many actions which are not conformed to this rule excite our approbation! A mother precipitates herself into the waves to perish with her drowning child: such a devotion appears to us noble; our feeelings compel us to say it, and yet if she was the only support of an aged parent, she has done wrong. An heroic courage, the generous exaltation of the most tender affections, have often produced sacrifices, which, though an austere morality would condemn, yet to which an idea of beauty is invincibly attached. From this fruitful source, spring the arts; and when they add their enchanting illusions to a charm already too powerful, they raise to enthusiasm the admiration which certain acts excite in us. Self-devotion is a principle common to all dazzling actions.

This seems to lead me to form some idea of perfection. In point of regularity, reason is the supreme judge, and reason knows what she wishes. She seeks to find qualities of which she has precise notions, and even when she can figure to herself no object which combines these

qualities, she can in each real object deny or affirm the existence of them. This is a simple act of judgment, of which the most dull imaginations are capable.

The case is not the same, with regard to the other element. We cannot define precisely beauty in the physical order; and in the moral order, we know better what are the qualities deserving of our esteem, than the vivid emotion to which the name of admiration is attached. It seems, in truth, that the sacrifice of one's self is the general character, which presents the most sublime examples. But if this enters necessarily into the idea of moral beauty, it is nevertheless insufficient to constitute it entirely, since a devotion which should be only an effect of weakness or habit, would affect us but little: thus there always remains something unknown to discover. The pleasure attached to admiration, is not, then, owing entirely to the exercise of the understanding, which is only satisfied with what it can clearly explain, but is owing rather to the flight of our most elevated faculties. The idea of beauty once enkindled in the bosom of man, the emotions are warmed, and imagination spreads her wings. Then it is no more real qualities which the mind contemplates, but lively, animated representations, clothed with colors more brilliant than those of reality. When the wonders of the arts, the master-pieces of genius, or the splendid endowments of one of our fellow-mortals excite in us lively emotions, they effect a development in our own soul, and the enchantment which we experience is perhaps less connected with the object of our admiration than with the charms of a new beauty which they have served to reveal to us. Thus, while they have at first surpassed our expectation, we soon discover defects in them, because they are far from equalling the ideal model formed in our mind. The nearer these terrestrial things approach perfection, the more elevated becomes the idea of perfection. The elements of

which it is composed, appear to us made to unite in an harmonious whole, and even the conditions which reason requires seem to add to beauty.

This is equally applicable to education. In proposing to form the character of the creature called *man*, instructors have to execute a work which they should seek to render perfect. They must not then lose sight of the two conditions necessary to form perfection. Reason, severe in her exactions, can define what she has a right to demand. She wishes a useful member of society, of the state and of the family; a man who attends to his own interest without injuring that of others, and who assists them as far as he is able; an enlightened man, who contributes to the progress of knowledge, and civilization; and who shows himself the advocate of religion, as well as a defender of morality. Behold the man modelled by reason. He will never be discovered in fault: we shall always approve his conduct, but we do not go so far as to admire him, and it is doubtful whether we should love him, if he had no other title to our esteem than his well-regulated conduct.

What is there then to regret in the original of such a portrait? What can be wanting to it? It lacks moral beauty: that element which expands the soul, which betrays in man the immortal being. Indications apparently very slight, can serve to discover to us modes of existence very different. He within whom rules the active principle of moral beauty, will distinguish himself little in his actions, from the man otherwise accomplished to whom this element is wanting. The first will be wise like the other, but his wisdom will have the air of inspiration; he will observe rule, like the other, but without thinking always that he does observe it: indeed it would seem rather that a happy harmony unites his feelings to his duty: thus we shall always approve him, but a more lively sympathy will draw us nearer him

and, by a singular contrast, we shall feel him more like ourselves, more our brother, and yet most superior to us. A word, a look, will be sufficient to establish between him and ourselves a rapid electric communication;* we know him before he acts; we know that upon the first signal, he will fly to the relief of suffering humanity; we shall find him in the day of misfortune.

Whence then proceed these impressions so different? Is there a real cause for the almost opposite feelings which these two beings excite in my mind? Yes, there is one; I believe the one capable of devotion, and I strongly doubt that the other is. Without the power of devotion there is no moral beauty. Nothing noble or great can exist on earth, without the powerful feeling which raises man above himself, which devotes him to an object worthy of his love, and, rendering him superior to the timid instincts of nature, seems to raise him above the limits set to humanity. When this living, expansive principle of moral beauty is wanting, man possesses but a cold merit, a precise regularity, the result of painful efforts to accomplish a work, which affects us little. It recalls to us the cube,

* What mind above the common mass of cold and heartless beings has not felt this kindling of its best emotions, when accidental collision with a kindred mind has elicited a sudden flash of feeling? In the circles of fashion this is perhaps a rare phenomenon; for we do not here refer to a transient admiration, or that of sentiment which evaporates as soon as expressed; but we mean that union of soul which sometimes takes place between kindred minds, in whom the finest feelings of nature, instead of being blasted by a servile devotion to low and worldly objects, have been cherished by the consideration of the high hopes and destiny of man, and a life consecrated to noble thoughts and pursuits. When such beings meet, they will at once feel and understand the tie which exists between them; if this be true with respect to those influenced by moral virtue only, how much more so of the disciples of Jesus! [Ed.]

or the well-polished ball, and our indifference to these symmetrical forms tells us that this is not the perfection for man.

Yet when regard for order and rule is carried so far as to give him who experiences it the power of sacrificing all to his duty, we may ask if we do not find in his devotion the principle of moral beauty, and if he does not exhibit the most elevated perfection? Without doubt he will present a spectacle worthy to be admired; he will realize stoicism, the sublime conception of ancient times, which has never been entirely foreign to great and generous souls: but it is upon universal sentiments that education should be founded, not upon a rare enthusiasm. The virtue and perfection which such a system supposes, are the noblest of human conceptions, but they are of an abstract nature. The most excellent qualities should be presented to us in a real object, in order to take consistence and life, and if that object is not God, it will be *self*. Here is a constant source of deception. It is, as Fenelon has said, *self virtuous*, and *perfect self* which we worship, when we imagine we only honor virtue; so that the worship which seems the most pure, often degenerates insensibly, into homage to our own merit.

Selfishness and pride, are almost inevitable with the being who has not consecrated his life to an object superior to himself. But, what is the object worthy to become the supreme object of man's desires? What is it which can satisfy wishes so boundless? There is but one such subject. Perfection is in God only, or, rather, it is God himself—God considered in his moral attributes. Mortal eyes have been allowed to contemplate his sublime image. The divine majesty has appeared in the Saviour of the world, veiled under the most lovely features of humanity. And when the splendor of celestial endowments is joined to the touching character of devotion, we not only admire,

but love so perfect a model; an infinite gratitude fills our heart with a desire of imitation.

Such is the power of Christianity. A new affection communicates to man a new zeal, which raises him above himself, and the individual can henceforth advance towards perfection.

CHAPTER III.

OF PERFECTION CONSIDERED WITH RELATION TO NATURAL AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES.

"Education should be displayed in the external appearance of the individual."—J. P. RICHTER.

AMONG human enterprizes, there are few which resemble that of education. The weakness of human nature presents an obstacle to the accomplishment of good, both in the instructor and in the pupil—in the workman, and in the substance wrought upon. We are there restrained upon all sides in the display of our zeal, and even in the flight of our imagination, since the point is not to create, but to direct a development, which is often slow in its progress. Ideal perfection would demand that the work once accomplished, this development should be complete; that the noble attributes of humanity should be exhibited in the pupil in all their excellence: but this is what we dare not hope.

There are limits imposed by nature upon the individual, as there are those enjoined by the social order upon whole classes of men.

What do we discover in the individual in early life? Faculties of different degrees of elevation, more or less susceptible of progress. Their extension and proportions are little known to us; but what we perceive of them, does

not answer to our wishes. Yet there is one method better than any other to pursue in the direction of these endowments. It is important to produce a combination so happy that these elements of unequal force shall be in equilibrium, and that the conditions imposed by religion and society may be filled. From this arises a kind of peculiar perfection for each pupil, and, when it is necessary to imagine, in anticipation. The instructor should have in view, a certain whole which he has never seen, but of which the child itself, in its most agreeable and interesting moments, gives him by degrees the idea.

That harmonious agreement which is presented by all parts of the works of nature, man was doubtless designed to offer; it seems yet to reign in early infancy, and an excellent education ought unquestionably to preserve it; but this is what we are far from having attained, as experience but too plainly shows.

When we observe the generality of men, we feel that they are not what they might have become. Do they possess eminent qualities? we perceive with so much the more pain certain defects which form with them a shocking contrast, and which seem scarcely to belong to the real character. The exclamation, What a pity! often escapes in speaking of those whom we most admire; and perhaps it may in certain cases be applied to every one.

On the contrary, if we observe narrowly less gifted beings, we find them not so far in the back ground as we at first supposed. They always possessed some talent; a particular aptitude to fill certain situations, and where they experience a tender or generous emotion, we perceive sudden flashes, which discover to us the kind of merit or perfection, which they might have possessed. They seem to be fruits of natural endowments, which have not been brought to maturity, or rather imperfect sketches of what was destined to have exhibited a more finished model.

But it is above all in regarding ourselves, that we are inclined to cherish these sentiments. Self-love, so often undeceived by the realities of life, considers the excellence of our natural talents. We were made to be better, we think, but circumstances have not favored us, and our own efforts have been weak or inconstant. What there is true in this respect, favors an illusion which is dear to us, and we constantly regret some lost superiority, some brilliant display of our faculties which we have not been able to make.

These thoughts were familiar to the ancients, of which the worship they rendered to their good genius is a proof. They saw in that supernatural being a kind of image of their own person, a better self released from the shackles of humanity, and designed to lead them by the hand through life. This being became the object of their warm affection: they invoked it, they offered it sacrifices, and to it their birth-day was particularly consecrated. When, upon important occasions, they came to consult it, it was as an appeal to what was most pure and most elevated in themselves.

This fiction exhibits the genius of Paganism: wherever we meet with it, we find there the characteristics of such a system—the deification of nature, considered as especially connected with each individual. It was also a species of God which the ancients sought to form in their sage. Their religion lowered the character of divinity in order to elevate that of man.

Yet the fable of the good genii presents itself under an interesting form. In attributing a celestial type to the individual, it inspires a certain respect for the human form; it imparts a sacredness and relief to the distinctive traits of each individual. It suggests to us a sentiment which should not be a stranger to our hearts. If the same creative hand, which has so magnificently diversified its

productions in the universe, has stamped upon each human being a peculiar character, then this character offers to us something sacred. It is the seal of the divine work, and the instructor should endeavor to preserve it. To discover how the greatest possible perfection may be given to the decided original bent of the mind, should be the object of his exertions.

It is indeed when he reaches this point, that man exercises the most power, that his qualities are most imposing, and that he accomplishes great things, with the least effort. It is here that a happy agreement is found between his sentiment and his conduct, his words and the expression of his physiognomy and his voice. If we recal to our thoughts the most lively impressions we have received, if we revive our most agreeable and dear remembrances, they will transport us to the moment when a being whom we admire has seemed to reveal his entire existence to us by a word, a gesture, or a look, which could belong only to himself. It is not always by his excellencies, it is perhaps even, by his eccentricities, that a distinguished man captivates our heart and delights our imagination.

Thus, great talents have always been accompanied by a strongly marked impression of originality, found with those who have rendered themselves illustrious by their virtues, or by the difficult enterprizes which they have accomplished. It is often manifested in early infancy, and when this is the case, it points out to education an important duty. It is the proof of a vigorous cast of character, and of a moral health. When nature is constrained or checked, it is certain that a wrong course is pursued with the subject of education.

It is, however, of importance to stop at the precise point. This fine expression of countenance is an advantage which should be preserved when it exists, and not procured by art.

It is the effect of certain happy endowments, which, in manifesting themselves, should be seen in harmony with truly solid qualities. Their development is always earliest, because this is the course of nature; but the progress of other qualities should advance sufficiently near, that they may support and fall in with the general character. If this cannot be the case, and the most important qualities must remain dormant, if we cannot hope that the whole moral being will increase together, it is better to repress a peculiarity which would produce no salutary result. The efforts of education should then be entirely directed to the weak side.

This seems to be a point upon which there is little agreement. Parents are tempted to take advantage of the dominant quality; they fear to produce in the mind of the pupil a certain level which is frequently met with in very ordinary men. But with those this level, perhaps, has been the triumph of education; without it they might have been as destitute of judgment, as they now are of genius.

When once the great foundations are laid, and the internal equilibrium solidly established, peculiar tastes may be indulged; but in childhood good proportions are all-important. Even genius bears its first fruits only in a well-regulated mind. Without effacing, therefore, the predominant trait of character, we should seek to make it harmonize with all the others.

The same fault is often committed from other motives. It is so fatiguing to be obliged to stimulate dull faculties, that a teacher sometimes allows himself to be entirely led by any thing promising in the materials which he has to operate upon; and, as these are materials which are easily moulded into any form, a serious evil results. Thus, one pupil is all memory, another all imagination. This is the consequence of great mistakes in education. The same

may be said of the employment of certain principles, as self-love, or an acute sensibility. These are good auxiliaries for education, only when they are in a state of activity; but it is precisely then that it is dangerous to excite them. To exercise constantly the preponderating force, and suffer others to lie dormant, is to add more and more to the moral disproportion.

The weakness of indispensable faculties, such for example, as reason, frequently imposes upon us the duty of checking the progress of certain other powers, and of early limiting the extent of the mental development in several respects. It is of importance that the impulse upon the soul be general, that all the faculties advance side by side, and yet each should be exercised separately, in order that their different degrees of strength may be tested. An attentive examination of the springs which act upon the young mind, is indispensable; for when results only are considered, we are always in danger of being misled.

I would remark here, that religion, which ought to be the centre, or as the common trunk of the various branches of education, can also furnish, at each era, the precise point where certain development should cease. When the growth of a particular faculty is too rapid for the general character, the pupil delighting in its exercise, is excessively pleased with any trifling success which it procures him, and infallibly prides himself in it. He knows no longer how to distinguish true excellence, and the only progress of importance, that of the soul, interests him no more. Then religious feeling chills in his heart, the sense of his duty becomes weaker, and the value which he sets upon his own talents, leads him to despise those of his equals. Thus, far from truly expanding, his spirit becomes contracted, and the acquisitions at the surface, serve only to conceal the poverty at the foundation. The love of God, and of our neighbor, these two grand charac-

teristics of Christianity, are only infallible proofs of the success of education in all its different stages. They are themselves a beautiful and harmonious development of our immortal nature, and thus they have been made to form the principal trait of the divine model which the Gospel presents to the imitation of men.

But when these sentiments are exhibited by the pupil, where they grow with his growth, and appear as the very soul of his conduct, then the progress of his mind in other respects should be accelerated. Education cannot give too much force to the various faculties of the mind. The most powerful of these faculties will be, in its hands, the best instruments for the execution of the best designs. And as religion and morality alone insure the purity of intentions, so the development of the understanding alone gives the hope that good intentions will be accomplished.

This may be verified in all the conditions of life. Education is doubtless obliged to recognize great differences of situation among men: not only does necessity force it to do so, but it is also reasonable, since there is in society a degree of perfection peculiar to each rank and condition. If there is an harmony to be established in the mind of the individual, there is one to be established between this individual and its destination on earth. A happy agreement of the sentiments, opinions, and tastes, with habitual occupation, facilitates the observance of the duties and the enjoyment of the pleasures attached to each situation. It is not then proper that the faculties be stimulated beyond the point where they find in real life a natura and regular exercise. From birth there is a scale of development suited to the various conditions of life; but in the most humble conditions, education has always a task to perform: it should always give a certain degree of cultivation to the understanding. There is a primary degree of instruction which is the natural right of each being, and of which no child should be deprived.

For a Christian, not to know how to read that divine law which he believes he cannot violate without hazarding his salvation; for a man liable to be brought before tribunals, to be unable to read those human laws which may condemn him to death; for him who gives or receives promises, not to be in a situation to give them validity by writing; for one who labors for wages, not to be capable of calculating what he has power to claim,—is to be ignorant of the conditions to which existence itself is attached, and in some cases to be deprived of the means of performing these conditions. These several incapacities throw incertitude upon human conduct in the various relations; they banish security; they oblige an unfortunate being to grope in midnight darkness, darkness which is often peopled with phantoms; and, in depriving him of information necessary towards the full exercise of his reason, his justice and his good feelings, they often destroy the effect of the finest endowments of nature. Indeed the state of ignorance which is thought to be accompanied by innocence and happiness,—in the entire absence of civilization, becomes daily more melancholy and more dangerous in our European society.

The idea of a situation so deplorable, the common lot of a multitude of men who possess nothing which they can call their own; this idea, I say, is a constant appeal to the charity of the Christian, to the solicitude of the philosopher. The education of the indigent class is as important to the other classes as to themselves, since education is the only certain mean of influencing morality, and of ruling by the curb of duty those upon whom it is not always easy to impose others. And let it not be supposed that a feeble glimpse of religion, such as is sometimes given to the ignorant, is sufficient. The incoherence and confusion of ideas of those unfortunate beings whose reason has not been exercised, invades the region of

religion also, causing the most dreadful superstition. This is but too perfect a picture of the condition of the poor classes in certain countries. And, to answer by a single fact the objections of those who are not in favor of establishments for the instruction of the people, I would say, that in England and Scotland, the public registers have proved that the number and importance of crimes have diminished in the exact proportion of the multiplication of schools.

It would seem that governments, deeply interested as they are in the maintenance of order and prosperity in society, ought to be affected with these considerations; but in waiting for this, the efforts of charity should not be paralyzed; individual activity can, in its sphere, produce much good. In elevated social positions, there is a natural magistracy which enlightened men can exercise. Our age seems already to feel it; the duty of imparting a primary degree of instruction to the indigent, seems already to be legibly inscribed upon many consciences. New motives and new encouragements are presented for perseverance in this undertaking. Before the influence of education has yet penetrated the mass, it can, in the elevated classes, form those capable of seconding this grand motion of the public mind, the result of Christianity, and an advanced civilization.*

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* No where has the truth that misery and vice most frequently proceed from ignorance, been demonstrated with so much force as in the writings of Dr Chalmers, the greatest religious genius of our church, and one of the most enlightened men of his age. The seal of the Christian, joined to the science of the economist, have conducted him to the true theory of the art so little known, that of relieving indigence: he has seen that the only way to succeed in doing this is to elevate the morals. The enemy of all abrupt change, he has found, and put in practice the means of delivering his country

In the superior ranks of society, the work of education thus becomes one of imposing grandeur. These duties, always sacred for the individual, assume an importance proportioned to the influence which he can exercise. There, when no defect in the character or in the mind opposes itself, the entire accomplishment of the divine will requires the free exercise of the most elevated faculties of the soul. It is not only enjoined upon man to do good, but to do all the good possible. How will he succeed in doing this, without making every exertion in his power—without calling into action that understanding, that power of invention, that facility in acquiring new ideas, with which he has been endowed by his Creator? Talent should not be buried—light ought not to be put under a bushel; — these are terms of the divine law.*

Indeed, whatever species of good we desire to effect, knowledge is necessary. It is necessary to enable us to combat in this world that ever-growing principle of evil, immorality; and it is necessary to enable us to relieve all kinds of misery; — men in the same situation, and animated by the same zeal, will contribute to the happiness of their fellow-creatures in the exact proportion of their

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from the scourge of the poor taxes, the assistance of which only produces ingratitude, and redoubles the misery of those to whom it is imparted. Persuaded that public charities are rarely exempt from inconvenience, he regards the education of the indigent, as the most certain and useful work of beneficence. A translation of the periodical work of Dr. Chalmers, (Christian and Civil Economy of Great Towns,) would be very instructive for the continent. [Ed.]

* The passages of Scripture, which some strangely suppose contradict this clear injunction, have often been misunderstood; they regard religion itself, the homage of the spirit; they teach a great truth; it is, that God should not be sought by means of efforts, or subtilties of the mind, and that the way to go to him is open to all his creatures. [Ed.]

capacity. We have need of a certain expansion of mind to possess influence, and in order that our influence be judicious.

That it should be thus with those who hold the first stations in society, with those who move the two great levers in civilization, legislation and public instruction, none will dispute. Neither do these obligations cease among those in a more private condition. The chief of a work-shop or of a counting-house, a great landed proprietor, or the father of a family, all have need of an enlightened reason to aid, console, and instruct their subordinates. All knowledge, all talent, extends the sphere of our power, gives us the means of acting upon a greater number of minds, and through these upon others also: thus the movement of one beneficent soul may be propagated and communicated to multitudes, along with the knowledge and instruction which have emanated from the same source.

Nothing which is innocent should be withheld from the being whom education aspires to form. He partakes all interests with which the destiny of his equals is connected. The mechanical and mental arts, industry, agriculture, commerce, all the animated movement, the varied exercise of human activity, will seem to him but the necessary result of the development of our faculties. Society, with the different destinations of man, represents to him the soul and its various attributes; it is, as it were, the relief of it; and in this enlarged image of himself, the Christian also recognizes that of God. This also he seeks to rid of the impure alloy which corrupts it, and to restore to its primitive beauty. The task of becoming perfect, which is imposed upon him, does not seem limited to himself. He exerts himself also for those by whom he is surrounded, but with wisdom; and, availing himself of what is best in the character of our age, he thinks that those classes of society, to whom Heaven has given knowledge and leisure, are made for the instructors of the others.

Such is, independently of the peculiar direction which the genius of the individual must determine—such is the disposition which education should seek to communicate, when no circumstances oppose it. To succeed in doing this, it is necessary, as I have before said, that each pupil possess the means and the will to continue to perfect himself. The means will consist in the commencement of a development during infancy; since the will being supposed, one degree of progress facilitates the highest ulterior progress at which we aim; but the most essential point, is the *formation of the will;* this remains to be considered.

CHAPTER IV.

INFLUENCE OF THE EDUCATION UPON THE STRENGTH OF THE WILL.

"Our daily avocation, is to become stronger than ourselves."—IMITATION OF CHRIST.

IT is with timidity that I approach this subject; but, without hoping confidently to remove the great difficulty of education and of life, it is of importance that we should examine that which meets us at every step. How shall we attempt to educate human beings, without examining the spring which moves them to action? And if we can obtain nothing from intelligent creatures without the participation of their will, the smallest portion of light upon the means of influencing it cannot be without importance. It will be useless, to employ ourselves with other objects relative to education, if we have not at least reflected upon that, which deserves, before all else, to be considered.

Will, mysterious force! powerful endowment, which seems alternately granted and withdrawn from man! Why does it often languish inactive, and then revive again in our breasts? How, to a state of apathy, does it cause suddenly to succeed one of activity? How, after having been lately tossed by the waves of our contradictory,

ephemeral, half-formed desires, are we as a vessel driving before the wind, and flying across the seas and through tempests to the place of destination?

The weakness and wanderings of the will seem to be attached to our nature. The effects of this evil may be restrained and moderated, but must in some degree continue to exist. On one side, the power of education in this respect is limited; on the other, it does not make all the use of it which it might. Its duties here seem to be reduced to three principal ones.

To fortify the will, to exalt and support it, if possible, where it may reign over the desires, finding in their strength, sometimes obstacles and sometimes aids, but never a power which subjugates it.

Again; as the will, independently of its strength, should have a determined character and follow a regular course; as it cannot display itself in acts without having to do with the inclinations of the heart; as moreover it is certain that we often feel it decided by the various motives which it may govern, education ought, in the *second place*, to give to the pupil the sentiments, tastes, and even the habits, which will exercise the most salutary influence upon the will, and which, in the moments when it is the least capable of effort, will impress a happy direction upon the conduct.

Finally; since notwithstanding the most assiduous cares, the weakness, the apathy, shall I say the momentary depravation of the will, is more or less clearly manifested in real life, the *third* and most essential duty of education, is to open to the pupil the way to that high source, where the soul can become renewed and acquire new vigor. I shall speak successively of these three duties.

The will, considered with regard to its strength, independently of its education, receives the appellations of firmness, energy, and constancy. It is, as it were, the

degree of life, the quantity of moral existence which each being possesses; it is that which gives weight to his words, to his actions, to his very silence; which renders him the object of an esteem, of a love, sometimes of a fear proportioned to the idea of a power which he possesses. What inequalities do we find in this respect among beings otherwise equal? Why, without having yet put them to the proof, do they produce so different effects upon us? Whence come those views of others which often exercise a great influence over our conduct, while no distinct thought has revealed to us our motives?

Is it in the power of instructors to increase the moral energy of a child? However this may be, it appears certain that it is very easy for them to diminish it: it is perhaps in this respect that we commit the most faults; one of the most essential objects is one most neglected. Unfortunately, education almost entirely tends to weaken firmness of character: it is most frequently, to say the truth, only a system of means to weaken the will. Persuasive and insinuating, it hinders its formation; severe and inflexible, it causes it to bend or break. It aims at the contraction of good habits, and the peculiar property of habit is to cause actions without the concurrence of the will. Here education is aided by the imitative instinct which produces an effect similar to that of a habit. Too often, in order to accomplish the object, deception is resorted to — the most pernicious of all examples, not only as respects morality, but energy.

Is it then that mankind do not know the value of energy? No, it cannot be; for life soon shows us its importance. Whatever may have been our actions, our feeling upon this point is unanimous; — if weak, we wish the support of energy; if strong, we despise one who does not possess it. Perhaps we in reality, value this quality above all others. Without it, morality seems to us only a good

intention, which is of little value; we feel but little admiration of devotion, when it proceeds from weakness of character; and if we sometimes hesitate to pay homage to brilliant talents, it is because we have too often seen them separated from firmness of character.

Yet, whatever may be the importance of this quality, the reason that instructors have not favored its development is very simple; it is because they always find it an obstacle in education. All which they desire to give to the child,—knowledge, application, wisdom, generosity, and good manners, require the continual sacrifice of the will. To diminish the energy of this faculty, is so convenient a course to pursue, that we often take it without thinking of doing so. Perhaps if we were aware of it, we should proceed in the same manner. While the wanderings of the will are always to be feared, while we are far and very far from being certain with regard to the direction of it, how can we seriously labor to give it a strength which can only increase the danger?

Education should, I think, value its resources sufficiently not to fear beforehand the development of strength of character; and since the government of parents or instructors, as well as the usages of society, have necessarily a repressive influence; since the progress of civilization has destroyed many sources of energy, it seems very essential to compensate for these several effects, and to give to the children, who are the men of the future, that nerve and force, of which the germ appears to have been granted them by the Creator.

It is not, however, in ceasing to exhibit firmness themselves, that instructors will succeed in communicating it. If they are weak and vacillating, they add a bad example to an influence equally bad, or rather to the want of that influence which it is their duty to exercise. It is proper, if we may so speak, that they should submit to the

obligation of commanding. The dominion, to which a state of entire helplessness submits man during infancy, is as indispensable to the formation of his morality, as the preservation of his life. It is the means designed by Providence for the development of all his qualities, including, among them, energy; and the employment of this means has for its end, and should have for its limit, the freedom of the will. Education will only render man free. It will commit to him the government of himself, as soon as he, released from the subjection to blind instincts, shall choose what is good for an immortal soul. The distinction between the strength of the desires and that of the will, although very ancient, may with propriety be here considered. The will ought to govern the desires, and when it holds its proper elevation, we see it an absolute sovereign, independent of the motives, incitements, and various solicitations which tend to subject and even enchain it. '*The ultimate reason of the free determinations of the will,*' says a modern philosopher, '*is in itself:*' if it were possible to discover it elsewhere, this discovery would be that of universal fatality.

Indeed, to maintain that our will is irresistibly influenced by the strength of the desires which spring from the heart, is to assimilate us to dead matter; it is to impose upon us, from birth till death, the yoke of an imperious necessity; it is to bid defiance to the unconquerable feeling which, in attesting to man his liberty, renders him responsible for his conduct.*

* The same may be said of the more noble opinion which subjects our will to the constant direction of the divine hand. That every thing depends upon God, and our liberty like the rest, who can doubt? But to affirm that we cannot at the same time be free beings is to limit the power of the Creator. Without urging the dangerous consequences of this doctrine, I would say that its effect

We have to consider here, only the free and reflecting will, since it is this alone of which education should seek to augment the power. It is of little importance that some metaphysicians consider that there is an intervention of the will in the most unthought of actions of our existence, in those which, like respiration, are performed during sleep. Another word is necessary to designate the cause of the movements of which we are conscious, that great faculty of the soul which acts with knowledge and liberty, and feels that it had power to have determined otherwise. If this power of choice, which constitutes its very existence, and without which we might regard it as annihilated, submitted to a blind impulse, it is equally annulled as if it were entirely passive.

This death, or at least this momentary paralysis of the will, is the lamentable effect of the tyranny of the passions, and the loss of the feeling of liberty is the infallible mark of their victory. There is no free will where the passions reign: there is none in that state of intoxication when man deliberates no longer, but allows himself to be borne along by the torrent of his desires, as by some external impulse.

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would be contrary to the views of the pious men, who have embraced it. In declaring the absolute impotency of the will, they wish to show us the necessity of having recourse to celestial grace; but should we always be in a state to have recourse to that, if our will was enchained? The act of prayer seems voluntary as well as any other; the accomplishment of the conditions of the divine covenant ought also to be so. All the exhortations of Jesus Christ and of the apostles suppose that we possess the power of deciding for ourselves; those even of the men whom we refute also suppose it, so true is it that in denying our liberty, we are involved in inconsistency! We must resolve to admit separately truths which are not irreconcilable, but which, in their application, are respectively modified in a manner unknown to us: such are *free will* and the influence of the Holy Spirit upon our souls. [Ed.]

'O my God,' says Fenelon, 'preserve me from that fatal slavery, which human arrogance has dared to call liberty.'

Such is the slavery to which, unfortunately, the child is subjected, who, not being directed by a steady hand, is given up to his own caprices. Such is the slavery which governs man during his whole life, when education, in neglecting to employ in season its most efficacious resources, has thus failed in its principal aim, that of rendering him master of himself. It is nevertheless true, that to attain this end, it should use its power with a wise economy.

It is indeed another way to enervate the will, to leave it constantly subjected to a foreign influence. This fault is also committed; and education, in our days, in divesting itself of its harsh and severe forms, has not avoided this second rock. A mild, and even voluntary servitude, deprives the soul of energy, as surely as one more rude.

We are often deceived in this respect; the pleasure which the child seems to experience in obeying, encourages us: he appears free, because he is happy; and we take his zeal for energy. But when the will is not self-determined, when it has only been made to follow, although freely, the impulse of others, we cannot calculate upon its stability. In this state of half subjection it can appear lively, ardent, and even faithful, without knowing the influence which is exerted; and we cannot therefore draw any certain inference from it with respect to firmness of character.

This is what we often see in education. To obtain the concurrence of the child is without doubt an important point. When once we have succeeded in that, the greatest obstacles seem levelled. The obedience has nothing servile; all is performed with facility, with joy; there is wind in the sails, and we advance rapidly. Yet we must not be under a mistake here. It is not in adopting the

desires of another, that we learn to decide for ourselves; and what is called a good will is not always the genuine. A child, animated by the desire to please his parents, may be able to conquer the first difficulties of study; he may be a model of conduct so long as he possesses the desire of their approbation, and yet remain without consistency or stability when this motive exists no longer. It is necessary for him to have learned to propose an object to himself, to choose at his own risk, the best means of attaining it. The free and deliberate determination, the faculty of foreseeing the difficulties connected with the course we have taken, is what gives its stamp to the mind, and firmness to the character.

If, then, the pupil is in future to be master of his conduct, it is of importance to make him follow two rules apparently opposed to each other; one of *subjection*, in order to accustom him to repress his capricious desires; the other of *liberty*, in order to form in him an independent will. This is a difficulty which is rarely viewed in its whole extent; hence (and perhaps above all in the most careful educations) few decided characters are developed.

Another still greater difficulty is, that we cannot depend upon the aid of the pupil in correcting his defects which arise from want of firmness. To teach him self-government it would be necessary that he should possess the spring which we wish to give him; and it is not even easy to make him understand what he wants. From the miserable apathy of a child who never has a spontaneous volition, and who consequently is not susceptible of any progress, to fainter shades of the same defect, it is of little use to address reproaches to those who have not received the active principle of moral life.

Irresolution, one of the most ordinary symptoms of the weakness of the will, escapes our influence; we have no fixed rule to give for opposing it; and here reasoning has

little effect. Irresolute people reason, perhaps, but too much; they view all objects under a thousand different aspects; they foresee a thousand different results which may follow any course whatever: what they need is that energetic direction which makes a single motive prevail over several; that we may hope or fear only a single thing. Shall we therefore direct the pupil to determine without reflecting, without considering what will result from his decision? Certainly not; this is not the part of reason; she counsels entirely contrary to this, and thus tends to augment the defect.

It is the same with fickleness, another defect in which the will is so prompt as to have the appearance of strength, but has none in reality, since it has no permanence. What can an instructor do in this case? It is not in his power to revive extinct tastes, and, on the other hand, it would be equally absurd to persist in a conduct which had for a motive only a desire or a sentiment which no longer exists, and which we cannot regulate by any general rules. We see then that reason, which is perfectly in its place when the object is to bend obstinacy in opinion, is much less so when it is necessary to communicate stability. Its resource here consists in taking advantage of circumstances, that is, to prove that on the occasion in question, the pupil will do best to persevere. But we feel that conduct thus influenced, has no security for the future.

To favor at the same time the work of reason, and the development of the best faculties, it is necessary, then, as it appears to me, that education commence by endeavoring to strengthen the character, to prepare the solid ground in which all good principles take root and bear fruit. The fickleness of the child renders this enterprize difficult; and as we are never certain of being able to influence him while nothing is yet fixed in his soul, the means of communicating firmness seem to be wanting like firmness

itself. Yet we must not despair. In the absence of rational motives, there remains a less elevated, but very efficacious resource, habit. By the habit of obedience, the pupil learns to repress his passions. In accustoming him to decide for himself in allowable cases, he acquires decision, and his will, no more passive, insensibly gains vigor.

The feeling of real liberty, but limited by necessity in its exercise, is that with which Rousseau wished to inspire his Emile. So far I agree with him; but I regard duty as the moral necessity, and this is what Rousseau does not admit. He exempts the pupil from the observance of this law, because he does not think him in a state to judge in what duty consists. There is, however, one duty which is very well understood by the child, and which initiates him by degrees in the knowledge of all others; it is that of obedience towards those to whom Heaven has confided his fate. His weakness, his wants, even his instinct, naturally place him in dependence upon them. It belongs to them to exercise their authority with mildness and decision. The problem to be solved in their government is presented in every government. The point is, to reconcile the greatest individual liberty, with the most perfect submission to laws.

For the attainment of this end, it is necessary to avoid orders half given, obligations partly imposed: such are insinuations, tacit solicitations; such is the pretence of leaving a child master of his conduct, while we envelop him with a thousand chains. The atmosphere of doubt dissolves energy, and relaxes the nerve of intentions. When the limits of liberty and duty are indefinite, a degree of uncertainty is spread over our projects, and even our actions; we have always to regret the resolution which we have not taken; we are always tempted to retrace our steps. To preserve the child, and afterwards the man,

from such torment, it is necessary that a just authority preside at the commencement of life, in giving a well-defined course to the will. Hence public education, in which we govern by immutable laws without constantly overseeing individuals, is the most favorable to the development of energy.

How far is the most exact discipline, united to the greatest independence, reconcilable with the sweetness of the relations between the teacher and the pupil, or between the parent and child, and the habitual confidence which should exist between them? How far, with young girls, especially, is it reconcilable with that grace, that prepossessing appearance, that regard for others, in a word, that refinement of manners, which we require in females? It is difficult to answer. Perhaps with them a strict discipline should not be for too long a time continued, but it must not be forgotten that all others have an enfeebling effect. Reason founded upon observation can only indicate principles, and numberless modifications afterwards find their place in the application. I will only add here, that deep affections belong only to strong minds, and that when once the feelings of the heart and conscience are well developed, they of themselves dictate all the refinements of conduct.

CHAPTER V.

IMPULSES OF THE WILL, AND THE INFLUENCE OF REASON.

'Man delights in reasoning, which is his chef-d'œuvre, and turns away from feeling, which is not his work; he believes that in removing one link in the chain of mysteries he approaches to truth.'

After having contemplated the will in the state of sovereignty, which seems the most absolute, we now view it reduced to a condition less elevated: under this aspect, it will appear to us influenced, even decided, by the impulses of which it has consented to follow the direction. It is then the various desires of the human heart, its instigators and responsible ministers, which we should blame for its wanderings. Hence the task of education, difficult to perform, but more easy to define, consists in surrounding the heart with guides which will not tend to lead it astray.

Education can find here a secondary source of energy for the will, in the strength of the motives employed to determine it. When these motives are important, when they merit the approbation of conscience and of men, their influence is often permanent, and the soul at length contracts habits of constancy. But if we are only concerned about

actions, if we wish only to cause or prevent these individually, we advance a thousand trifling motives, without ever impressing a general direction. The pupil conducts well, but his morality remains passive; and we have, as it were, formed a character destitute of substance. Yet with infancy, motives only have importance. At this age, the future is every thing; actual results have little value, and the best actions are important only as indications of impulses which are to be prolonged. A man may do good or evil, independently of his intentions: his fellow-creatures suffer or enjoy the consequences of his conduct, and they do not need to investigate the motives of it; but a child, exercising no influence abroad, all the activity which we demand of him is relative to himself; and when we suggest to him bad, or merely equivocal motives, we do him an injury for which no advantage can compensate. The nature of the motive is all with him; the desire of learning ensures success in intellectual education, as does that of performing duty in the education of the heart. A decided resolution does not remain without effect in youth; and the knowledge once desired, can scarcely fail of being obtained.

But I already hear the reply of parents. We should prefer, they say, that our children might be moved by the pure love of virtue: hence we always commence by telling them that duty requires of them that they do or neglect to do a certain thing; but we do not see that this consideration has much effect upon them. If, on the contrary, we place before them some hope or fear, founded upon interests which they better comprehend, we obtain what we wish of them. We employ means which of themselves possess activity; we always give them useful habits, in the hope that reason will hereafter add to them good motives.

This language is assuredly very plausible. The plea is good in a desperate case: I maintain only that we give

it up too soon. The impatience to arrive at positive results is such, that we choose the shortest way of doing this, without considering whether it is at the same time the best. We do not reflect sufficiently, that to act from selfish motives is also a habit which it is not easy to eradicate. The idea of duty coldly presented, has, I acknowledge, but little influence; but a more profound study of the means of acting upon the will, may open some new route: before pursuing a course morally bad, we should be sure that there is no other to choose. An excellent intention, and zeal to perform its duties, are not a very rare phenomenon with a child. The happy instinct of mothers, and certain particular circumstances, often favor such dispositions, the germ of which exists in all souls: the means of developing them, will soon be considered in this work; but here, where we are chiefly occupied with principles, the question presents itself in all its importance. A more exact knowledge of the true impulses of the will, seems equally necessary to education as to morality. And since, under a very general point of view, these impulses are the same with children and with men, if we would have our knowledge founded upon observation, the surest way is to study what passes in our own heart, an object of examination always present and suited to our purposes.

Yet, what we experience is not easy to unfold; the springs of our actions are concealed from our own eyes. Our determinations are more quickly taken than their motives are discovered, and those which we assign to them are not always the true ones. Subjected to the necessity of reasoning, as soon as our mind, reflecting upon itself, would judge of our internal state, we are probably inclined to exaggerate the power of reason over us. Too great faith in its influence upon morality, is perhaps the error of an age, proud of the light which reason has diffused over a thousand objects.

It is in general agreeable to us to believe that we act upon rational principles; to establish these principles, to apply them to our particular situation, and to prove that our life is conformed to them, is the chain which we constantly seek to form. This chain is not difficult; but it is not so with the delicate thread which binds our actions to our sentiments. The influence of our secret instincts, of tastes, antipathies, dislikes, of the good or bad desires which animate us, it is difficult to seize, often embarrassing to acknowledge; and yet these emotions of the soul are the unknown source of the greater part of our decisions.

It is easy for us to observe this with others. We see plainly that our friends are determined by that mass of impressions and sentiments which seem often to make up the character; but no person believes himself to follow any other guide than reason. We seek, therefore, to find how the course which we have taken accords with our rule. Our pretended motives are invented after our acts: the general principles with which we intend our conduct shall agree, appear to us to have been the foundation: and we take for the cause of our decisions, what is only the apology. Other maxims present themselves as soon as we have occasion to change, and there are always eternal truths to support our passing resolutions.

What are we to understand by the word reason? In the extended sense which philosophy has given to it, we employ it to express understanding, that great faculty of the soul by which we discover truth. Taken in a more limited sense, it is applied to the conduct of life, and continues to retain its first signification. Reason, also, as it is commonly considered, decides upon the relation of effects to causes, deduces consequences from principles, and pronounces relatively to the individual, upon the advantages or inexpediency of actions. Elevated above the inequalities and weaknesses common to humanity, we may consider

it as the wise counsellor, who, in the government of ourselves, endeavors to maintain an equilibrium between our different powers. If it finds itself supported by exalted principles, it takes a very elevated character. United to religion, it may become the lofty wisdom which comprehends our internal interests; confined to the moral world, it draws from the constitution of society, practical rules for our conduct. Indeed whatever principle we admit, and whatever feeling animates us, this governs, in the calculation of the consequences which we are to experience from them. Incapable of creating our various inclinations, it only teaches us to direct those which exist. It is then a regulator, and not an impulse. This alone shows the kind and limits of its power.

When reason considers man in the abstract, it supposes him endowed with the most noble qualities, and consequently points out to him the greatest happiness to which he can aspire. From this fact arise the admirable precepts which the wisdom of all nations has collected; but when reason addresses herself to the individual, she does not find in him all the faculties equally developed: some are languishing, others have an excessive activity; and as she can only appeal to those which already possess a certain degree of life, there remain to her few general rules to give.

Yet the influence of reason is always salutary; it takes the future into the account; it forms a union among the weak sentiments, in order to subdue the more violent; it says to a creditor irritated by the continued delays of his debtor,—If you cause this man to be imprisoned, you will feel pity at the distress you will occasion his family, and the world will condemn your excessive severity. These considerations may be perfectly just; but why has reason produced an effect in presenting them? It is because it has found compassion and the fear of blame; otherwise it would have had no influence.

Such is the part of reason. Its skill consists in balancing the desires, the one class by another; its resource is the action of opposing forces. Possessing of itself no power, and acting but by the aid of the very feelings which it is sometimes called to oppose, if it finds in the soul nothing to which favors its influence, it loses all its efficacy. When this is the case, there is no foundation in the character either for morality or true happiness.

Education cannot therefore attend too soon to the establishment of impulses; it should direct the development of the various faculties which act upon that sensible part of the soul from which the desires spring, and where decisions are formed. There are impulses of various kinds, which it is useful to distinguish. Some more particularly named instincts, watch over the preservation of our material existence; others, not less selfish, but more nearly allied to morality, are stationed to guard that part of our happiness which depends upon the opinion of men. Such are self-love and its various modifications. Others, more elevated, as the feelings of justice, truth, and beauty, introduce the soul into the calm regions where it is purified, enlightened, and enlarged. There are others more impetuous, which seem to transport our existence out of itself, to place it among objects foreign to us, and cause us to live in other souls; such are the tender affections, which from sympathy, their weakest shade, to the complete devotion of love, cause us to experience for our fellow-creatures, emotions as vivid as those which have self for their object. Finally, there exists one impulse which combines all the others possess that is great, tender, or devoted, which elevates the soul, not only above its proper sphere, but the world itself, and gives it a foretaste of eternity. This, I need not to say, is the religious sentiment.

This inequality in the moral value of the impulses of the human heart prescribes to us the course we should

pursue. It is the more essential for education to cultivate the disinterested and generous feelings, as these alone require culture. The selfish desires and physical instincts grow without care; they are even indestructible. If then you do not strengthen those which balance them, you not only cease to make any progress towards good, but you deprive reason of the greatest force which she can oppose to unreasonable desires. Do we not see that the passions are ungovernable in selfish hearts? This is what we do not, perhaps, sufficiently consider.

Thus each state of morality and of feelings corresponds with man to the idea of a certain kind of happiness; and his reason, limited by this state, can indicate to him nothing beyond. Extol to some beings the beauties of nature, the charms of study, of friendship, of domestic life, and your voice will resound in the desert of his heart. If the effects of eloquence are transient, it is because it has only roused dormant impulses which very soon sink to their former state; having never been called into action, they are not there connected with the permanent interests of life.

Confined to a sphere, yet reason does her best; what more could we wish? Ask of her to regulate interests purely material, she will counsel to prudence; she will tell you to abuse nothing, to preserve your health, your fortune, and will make of you one of those people whom Socrates ridicules in the Phédore, in saying that they were temperate by intemperance. Seeking to make us avoid dangers, she will encourage the observance of the social laws, since we cannot neglect these without exposing ourselves; and, without having the motive of hope to give us, she will have at least at her disposal a liberal supply of threats.

Where reason does not find itself based upon lofty principles, it preaches the morality of consequences; it leads

us to view the results of our actions more than their motives, and shows that vice produces evil, instead of leading us to regard it as itself an evil. It thus enters again into the system of utility, the master-piece of its most ingenious combinations, insufficient, like itself, for its own ends, and without value in improving the heart. It undoubtedly possesses a repressive principle, but a force which can only be employed to restrain is often insufficient even for that. It is necessary to have the power of opposing one emotion to another, the sallies of good feelings to those of bad desires; for if the simple barrier of duty only is opposed to them, the violent passions too often overleap it.

That reason is indispensable in life, that without it we could not take one step, that it is necessary to govern the inclinations, or to direct them, I readily admit. I say further, that, in a very extended point of view, we see that it has some power over the formation of sentiments; but it is an influence slow and indirect. In frequently repressing excess, it deprives in the bad inclinations of exercise in the same proportion, and may in time extinguish them. There is implanted within us a principle of development, a vitality, which, restrained in one direction, is borne in another; and even the feeling of selfishness cannot for a long time remain stationary in the human heart. The character of the same generation changes little; but what one does by calculation, another does by impulse. The religious and disinterested feelings spring up, and facilitate in their turn the work of reason. She then causes a prevalence of truths which have long remained dormant, and which assume a rank in society, as soon as public sentiment accords with them; and when these truths are expressed in actions, when they influence manners, and institutions are consecrated to them, their real value appears, in the production of national intelligence and virtue.

But it is the correspondent development of feelings and intelligence, which produces these happy results, and these can be but little appreciated at a distance. Ages and people must be placed in the balance, in order to perceive the weight which reason has given to them. When she has not time to act, when her action is confined within the narrow sphere of the mind of a single man, her influence must be very limited;—in order to produce great effects upon communities, reason must have a simultaneous action upon many minds.

On all sides we discover our limits: this is what I propose to show. The emotions are impetuous, blind, subject to various excitements; but they are the living forces of the soul. Let us cultivate them in our children, along with the intellectual powers; let us never leave them without nourishment in the heart, or without exercise in the life, and let us not repose upon reason alone. We believe that the greater part of the evils of this age may be attributed to that systematic personality, which leaves individuals without energy, as well as the political body without vigor. When one is attached to nothing, it is well for him to be attached to himself. Selfishness is only a more severe word to express indifference to others; its natural effect is to neutralize all other loves.

In general, the fault of education is rather negative than positive; it is in what we neglect, rather than in what we do. During a long course of instruction where all is passive with the child, without understanding the nature of the mind, there is danger that its fair proportions will be irrecoverably altered. The memory and reasoning powers are too often exercised alone, and the feelings are neglected, excepting self-love, which is excited as a stimulant. What may we expect will be the result of such a course? Exactly what we may observe with grown

people, a great want of disinterested motives, and an ever-increasing preponderance of those which are sensual or selfish: such cannot fail to be displayed sooner or later. A will, feeble for what is good, ardent and skilful for every other object, thus becomes a necessary consequence.

CHAPTER VI.

INFLUENCE OF THE RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT UPON THE WILL.

"The feeling of human weakness sustained by divine assistance, constitutes the character of the true Christian."—CELLERIER.

IN exposing some of the faults of education, I am far, from attributing to a want of care the various imperfections of the will. The evil is probably too deep-rooted in our nature for us entirely to remedy.

It is not in the province of morality alone that the perversion inherent to this faculty manifests itself. We every where meet with it, and even in the direction of our nearest interests. What man is there who, in the direction of his health, of his fortune, or of his family, will never accuse himself of negligence; or who does not sometimes think he has not acted according to the dictates of a clear-sighted prudence? Whence does it arise that this reproach is almost always well-founded? Why, under the most favorable suppositions, when our judgment is correct, when our feeling speaks aloud to us, as in the case of our children and ourselves, why are we constantly subject to apathy, or to some moral evil, still more serious?

To account for it, it is necessary to allow a secret disorder, a concealed source of irregularity attached to the

exercise of the will. Yet we usually believe it better to deny this truth: we exalt our power over ourselves in order to give us this power; but the means are inefficacious, as experience proves. All that is necessary, we say, is *to will. Every one can accomplish what he wills;* fine maxims and just ones, in a certain degree, good perhaps to obtain a sudden determination which we cannot retract, but without habitual influence. It is out of our power always to will, as well as always to will that which is good, and we must not treat lightly a difficulty under which human nature too often sinks.

What is our condition when left to ourselves? On one side, emotions the very life of the soul, powers without which man is nothing; but these feelings are subject to a fatal intoxication, and therefore susceptible of becoming our greatest enemies: these are our impulses. On the other side, reason, powerful when exercised without ourselves, but weak and timid when it is directed within; because it is dependent on that very state of morality, which it is to govern: this is our regulator.

Is it then astonishing, without supposing a degree of energy, which nature and education rarely combine to develop,— is it, I say, astonishing, that the will is inconstant in its influence? that it is inactive and insensible in the absence of emotions; inconstant and vehement when they oppose it; violent, obstinate, even depraved and liable to precipitate us to ruin, when subject to some bad passion? Conscience, it is true, gives us advice conformed to the best morality, but we often stifle its voice, and refuse to listen to it: the means of rendering us attentive to it are precisely what we seek.

In thus tracing the evil to its root, in viewing the extent to which it has affected the very principle of our actions, viz. the will, we seem to be left without hope. But divine goodness has not left us without a resource.

Among the emotions, the most powerful agents of the soul, there is one more pure, more noble, more closely connected with morality than the others,—the religious sentiment. This, finding nothing on earth sufficient to satisfy it, seeks assistance from above. It interrogates, it implores all nature, and every where it hears a secret voice which seems to answer to its appeal. This instinct left to itself, would doubtless wander but too often; but it is not in false paths that we are called to contemplate its progress. We shall consider it as it always may be developed by an enlightened education: and since man must possess impulses, since reason once formed will only be exercised over the passions, since she assumes her most lofty character only when she finds noble inclinations to reign in the soul, it is important to show that the religious sentiment is the only one which can give a happy impulse to the moral life.

But the field here becomes so vast, that I hesitate to survey it. Religious feeling joined to Christian faith, and finding in the word of God its rule and its director, is a source of moral virtue so abundant that I cannot speak of it in detail. I shall, departing in a degree from my subject, the original impotence of the will, consider religious feeling in one of its most striking peculiarities, that is the access which it procures us to a superior power.

The defect of systems where some good principle of our nature is considered as the basis of all morality, is in general to offer resources which fail when they are most needed. The endowments of the soul are indeed all that we have at command. Nothing foreign to our heart can affect us; but a principle which should belong to our intimate constitution, would impress upon the soul an influence the more salutary as it would raise it from despondency when it had despaired of its own powers. We are told to depend entirely upon our own resources, when we

are not confident that we possess any. We are pointed to reason, when we are not rational; we are referred to virtue, when it is virtue which is feeble. As soon as a desire is felt with that ardor and intensity which gives it the name of passion, one single idea alone occupies us. It pursues and besets us; it plunges us into a fearful dream. All the proportions of our moral nature are changed; all our feelings betray us; even those which should defend us range themselves upon the strongest side. Our opinions deceive us. The excitement of passion leads us to see generosity, greatness, more ability to do good in a new extension of our existence, and the shade of a false virtue contributes still to make us stray. How can we know ourselves while a prey to such infatuation? Where can a safe asylum be found in a heart already seduced from rectitude? Is not some fulcrum such as Archimedes required to move the world, necessary to raise the soul from such a state? What then is to be done when we feel indifferent to what is good? What is to be done when we no longer experience the good resolutions of our youth, when we have even no fear of the consequences of our moral abasement? What shall we do, if, after vain efforts, our wearied soul remains subject to a fatal passion, which nothing within us is sufficient to balance? I say, with a deep conviction for such a situation, which is, alas! too frequent, the only resource is religion.

Let us then prostrate ourselves at the feet of the Supreme Being; let us plunge into that immensity of consolation and succor; let us draw from the source of life; let us do this, and virtue will revive in our heart. An eternal instinct, the very bias of our soul, the desire of our excellence, of order, of grandeur: the harmony of the universe which gives us the idea of its Creator; all tend to dissipate a fatal intoxication, and to cause a purer day to illuminate our spirit. When we give ourselves

up to these influences, the calmness of celestial regions seems to diffuse itself around us: a deep and solemn impression announces to us a new state, a state at the same time humble and sublime, in which the will submits, the intentions are purified; where we are willing to give the future to the disposal of God, and where his holy law seems to be engraven on our hearts. Prayer, the sacred refuge where our passions dare not follow us, the source whence the life of the soul is restored—prayer has over our heart a powerful influence, and he who has not felt it, has not invoked God with perseverance or faith.

'*Enslaved by our passions*,' says Rousseau, '*we are made free by prayer*.' Never did a more just expression proceed from a mind less aware of the force of what he uttered. When we are not in a situation to resist our inordinate inclinations, we can weaken them by prayer; this is but the same truth in other terms.

The child may soon feel the habitual need of communing with God, of imploring him in his troubles, of submitting to him his desires, of examining before him his past conduct, and his future projects, of imploring of him strength to enable him to persevere in good and to renounce evil. The more he examines his intentions in the presence of the perfect Being, the more will his morality be formed; the better will he discern his least faults, and the more will the restoring power of repentance and love purify his heart. Such is the direction which education can produce; such the energetic impulse which may thwart without annihilating the alternations of the will. But how shall we prevent the recurrence of these alternations, or inequality in love to God, in obedience to his holy law? how shall we preserve the pupil from these sad variations which seem to be the inevitable lot of human beings? The weakness of intentions is soon rendered sensible in actions. The more delicate is the

conscience, the more will it perceive, the more will it be appalled with what it must upbraid itself for. The fear of having offended the Supreme Judge, joined most frequently to the wretched consequences of sin, may plunge the guilty soul into discouragement, and despair, may even lead him into the most deplorable wanderings, as the history of false religions proves but too true: it is then essential that the means of elevating the will during the whole life, be as efficacious as that of deciding it at the commencement. Here is the triumph of Christianity.

In this important respect the peculiar character of our holy religion is shown in all its splendor. It is its peculiar object to alleviate our miseries, to save us from sin, the greatest of all evils. Its law, (and how can we fail of recognizing in this feature, its Divinity?) its law is at the same time rigid and compassionate; we always discover through its mysteries the union of justice and mercy; and in the bloody sacrifice of the Saviour of the world, truth becomes a sublime symbol to announce to guilty man, the pardon granted through faith and repentance.

Indeed, if we view our religion in relation to its influence within us, we shall see that its morality, the most scrupulous of all before the commission of offences, is the least productive of despair, after them. In reading the writings of mere moralists, we find in them the marks of a certain cold severity. Like society, whose interests they take in hand, they grant no pardon to the guilty, and trust little to their repentance. Feeling that they offer no powerful means of regeneration, they believe that the best man has a necessary progression to evil; they ascribe all evils to some false direction taken in infancy, and, attributing an exaggerated importance to first impressions, they are inclined with Paley to regard man as a bundle of habits.

Man is not, however, entirely made up of habits; he possesses a principle of life, a restoring principle; but the

Christian religion alone can communicate activity to it, because this only has in its power at all times that which puts this principle in play, Hope. This only has hope for the guilty as well as for the dying. It takes man as it finds him, innocent or criminal, young or old, honored or despised of others, and always sustains or elevates him, always possesses motives to improvement to offer him. It is because the principle of Christianity is sufficiently powerful to form habits, and to break them off, to avail itself of the influence of time, and to conquer that influence, that it possesses a peculiar and inestimable advantage in the government of the whole life.

I am ready to allow that the love of virtue may exist in lofty souls without any distinct idea of religion. Like talent and genius, this noble ardor is a gift from above; there are in moral as well as in physical nature sublime works of God; but without speaking of the hopes, the consolations, even the degree of perfection of which virtuous men who remain strangers to piety, are always deprived, so that they still lack the most noble of our attributes, I would say, that it is not our object to consider these. Innate qualities are out of the question. What education seeks, at least with respect to the present life, is to revive the germ of virtues which would not naturally be developed.

On the other hand, there is a more extensive class of beings, who, without being acted upon by strong impulses, avoid great excesses. As temptations are not always strong, negative merit is so common that there is a probability of being able to obtain it; if our tenderness, and solicitude for our children are moderate, if we reflect but little upon their fate in eternity; we shall limit our ambition for them to a similar situation. A thousand different motives may combine to direct persons of good sense to a course of decent morality. The world, opinion, immediate

personal interest are restraints upon them. But the desire, the constant necessity of perfection felt in the inmost soul, the firm intention of pursuing it, whatever may be the outward discouragements, such feelings, and such an intention, cannot, it seems to me, be founded upon a mere moral emotion. The progressive improvement of the heart, in my opinion, requires a religious influence. Depending upon more assiduous cares than simple morality requires, the progress of the heart shrinks from observation. He who wishes above every thing else to rectify his secret motives, will often abstain from some action which appears to be good, if he perceives it would lead to evil; he must then renounce the approbation of men; and yet if he had only to do with himself, he would be liable to remissness in duty. Should we be sure to persevere in a long and difficult enterprize, if self only was considered? And would pretexts be wanting when we came to be weary of sacrifices which would have self alone for their judge and object.

God only is at the same time within and without ourselves: within, to witness our efforts, our motives, our least thoughts; without, that we may adore, supplicate, and fear him; that all lofty moral ideas, the objects of our veneration, exist in a sensible being, who sees, encourages and pities us. God is wisdom, living, animated; a wisdom, which feels love and inspires it. Perfection and moral beauty have in him an individual existence; they speak to our heart and communicate with us. The necessity of placing ourselves in harmony with the object of our devotion, which is so imperious for those who love, becomes a motive for constant improvement. We feel that the vicious impulses of our soul are the obstacle that separates us from God, and henceforth that obstacle diminishes. We are penetrated by a salutary influence. When to the idea of the most holy God is joined that of the reconciled

God, the God who pardons our offences; then what is most lofty in contemplation, most tender in gratitude, consumes, dissolves, so to speak, the mass of evil in our heart, and the will regenerated becomes swallowed up in the eternal source of all goodness.

It is thus that religion and morality reciprocally support and serve each other; being alternately the means and the end. If we may judge of the designs of God, it would seem that the moral development of man, or the perfecting of his free will, is the design of his Creator in placing him in this world, and that if he has not formed him perfect, it is because, wishing to have him in a state of progression, it was necessary that he should have perfection in view. Considering man in his character of humanity, it appears that religion, or the union of the soul with God in time and eternity, should be the great object of his pursuit, and that the exact observance of the divine law, which is at the same time the moral law, is the course by which to attain this end. When these attempts are the effect of love to God; then he will be constantly advancing; but, far from boasting of his progress, he scarcely perceives it—so inferior does he still remain to the model before him.

The instructor is, with regard to the child, what Providence is with regard to man; he desires his present and future good, that of his immortal soul; and he studies, as far as he is able, the designs of God, in order to conform his views to them. In attempting to exhibit the progress of thought in the mind of the instructor, we shall give the summary of our principles.

Supported on one side by the authority of Christianity, and upon the other by that of conscience, the instructor dares to pronounce that the object of man in this life should not be merely happiness. The law of our nature, which inclines us to enjoyment, seems to him that of our

blind instincts, of the physical power which influences us during the slumber of the will. To give predominancy to the law of the soul, to the law which impels moral feeling and all the intellectual faculties towards perfection, each one in its destined degree, is the task which the enlightened and virtuous instructor prescribes to himself in education.

In examining how the idea of perfection is formed in the soul, he finds that it consists of *two elements*; the one is *regularity*, which produces in us the love of order, — the other, *beauty*, which gives rise to admiration. In the sphere of morality, regularity is only the observance of the law of duty; while beauty, as the most sublime examples combine to prove, presents especially the character of devotion; and since God is the only object of devotion, to whom we owe the performance of all our duties, we should consecrate ourselves to God, that is to say, to real, living holiness; to that God, who, bearing our own nature, is offered to us in the Gospel as himself the example of devotion, and the highest degree of perfection.

Yet the instructor should measure the extension of his plan upon the possibility of executing it. If he takes the best possible advantage of the unequal faculties of the individual, the result, although it may lack brilliancy, will always present harmony and originality of structure united to beauty of foundation. But to the end that order may reign in the breast of man, all partial progress should be prevented if it causes a loss of that moral and religious development, which is truly that of the soul. On the contrary, when nothing in external circumstances or in character is opposed to it, education may take the most lofty flight, and favor the growth of all the faculties; secure that they will take a happy direction.

Such are the views of the instructor; but how can he succeed in the execution of any design, if he cannot rely

upon the aid of the pupil? What course shall he take to form and direct the will, a faculty irregular in its exercise, and which seems to be subject to no law? Without well understanding its nature, he observes at first that the will is generally deficient in strength. Often incapable of performing its noblest employment, that of reigning over the desires of the heart, it still sustains the yoke of a foreign influence. These two kinds of weakness seem to him to require two opposite rules. That the child may be accustomed to repress his passions, it is important to subject him to a strict discipline; in order that he may learn to form his own decisions, it is necessary to render him in many respects independent. It does not, however, seem impossible to him to put this double system in operation. The empire of law and that of liberty, subsists peaceably together, when their respective limits are distinctly traced.

But how shall he succeed in governing the will which he wishes to render energetic? What, with regard to it, is the power of reason upon which we ordinarily found so many hopes? In examining this question narrowly, the teacher perceives that reason can cause no other power to prevail in the heart than that of the inclinations which it finds already formed there. He sees it to be a regulator, and not an impulse; and feels the consequent necessity of cultivating disinterested feelings with the child, which only are able to balance the impetuosity of selfish instincts. The inaction of the heart, during the continuance of an education too exclusively intellectual, seems to him accordingly at the same time to favor selfishness, and to leave the passions without a counterpoise.

This leads him to feel the importance of religion. Does he wish to give decision to the will? the religious sentiment is a powerful and universal impulse, deeply rooted in our nature, and tending more than any other towards

good. Does he wish to repress it? Christian morality is more pure, more strict, and still more adapted to the wants of humanity than philosophical morality, since the whole system of our duties may be understood by the mind, while we feel no desire to practise them. But what particularly distinguishes religion, what displays its divine energy, is the power which it has to regenerate the heart. The pardon upon which faith dares to calculate, is the only source of hope which reanimates the soul, borne down under the weight of its transgressions; and as a tender conscience incessantly loads itself with reproaches, the benefit of this pardon extends to every one. A way always open, an object always in view, and yet never attained; this is what Christianity presents. Among those who embrace other doctrines, there are doubtless moral men; but are there any but Christians who labor seriously for their own spiritual improvement?

Whatever path the teacher pursues, he is constantly brought to the point where all paths meet. God, the first cause in the universe, the focus from whence the soul emanates; God is the object towards whom education, which includes all the relations of man, ought to be directed. Yet, in referring things connected with our earthly relations to this centre, education would by no means leave them to be neglected. Its ultimate end is the life to come; but its proximate object, that which it seeks immediately to attain, is the happy conduct of the present life. The order of the universe is the object of its instruction; and it not only teaches a knowledge of the world, but admiration of it, in showing that all it contains, which is grand and pure, is of divine institution. It encourages innocent enjoyments, knowledge, the general elevation of the faculties; and would repress such emotions as are dangerous, and unsuited to the nature of infancy.

Eager to discover the indications of Providence, judicious teachers respect and cherish the peculiar spirit of each age; they know how to take advantage of it and to give it the proper direction. We would not view with a gloomy mistrust the various influences to which the pupil must be exposed in order to acquire knowledge, when we consider the present world as the school where the soul is to be formed, where it is to learn to fill hereafter a superior destiny. In the hope that 'all things shall work together for good to them that love God,'* we would not be immoderately disquieted to see commence in youth those struggles and trials, which give firmness to the character, and test the value of principles. At this period mingled sentiments of good and evil, passing emotions often excited by frivolous causes, are occasions of the development of the mind, like the vicissitudes of temperature on vegetation, which nourish the precious germs, and give motion to the sap. Then the infinite variety of things in the world, so many objects at the same time innocent and full of interest, seem designed to excite within us an equal variety of impressions, to wake those chords destined by their Creator to vibrate: should but one of these chords remain silent, the soul, like an untuned lyre, may be unable to unite its strains to the celestial harmony of eternity.

To sanctify human life, to discover and put in action the treasures which the Divine hand has deposited in the heart of man, seems to be the part of education.

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* Romans viii. 28.

BOOK SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEANS OF PERFECTING THE ART OF EDUCATION.

'When one perfect being shall have taught another, then shall we know what are the limits of the power of education.'—KANT.

EDUCATION, says a celebrated philosopher, is an art, since nature has not in respect to it given instinct that could serve to guide us. That instinct has been refused to us in relation to this subject does not admit of a doubt. While the brute creation have always the same manner of bringing up their young, man alone is destitute of any peculiar method. How many different customs do we find existing among savage people! Some plunge their children, as soon as they are born, in cold water; others press the head between boards; others suspend them in their cradles to the branches of trees, and thus abandon them; and others bind them tightly in narrow bandages. The most universal sentiment of nature, that of mothers for their offspring, has been permitted to introduce and sustain a multiplicity of barbarous customs, and even love itself has sanctioned them.

Civilized people have reflected more, and nothing so revolting is found among them. They have not succeeded, however, in reducing the theory of education to any fixed principles. Towards the middle of the past century attention to this subject very rapidly increased, and the extreme importance of it began to be felt. The best minds, as well as the most eloquent writers, have become interested in it; but the more they have reasoned, the less it would seem they have been listened to. In Germany, where under the name of Pedagogy, the learned have wished to make education a true science, teachers are all at war among themselves. Each one has a system differing from that of his fellow — each method has in turn been blamed and justified. Authority, emulation, punishment, and reward — severity and indulgence, rigid rules, and the absence of rule, have each had their partizans and detractors. What shall I say then of public and private education; of methods of teaching; of the distribution of studies; and of their principal object? Almost all these are yet questions of debate. The paternal feeling has certainly always existed in the human race, and there is much reasoning about it at the present day. What is then wanting for the advancement of the art of Education? It needs that experience should be much more consulted; it needs those numerous and minute observations which alone can give to it a solid and reasonable foundation.

In works of the first distinction, where what is expressed makes us regret still more that which is passed in silence — Mr. Edgeworth and his daughter have already said that education was an experimental science. Nevertheless, they have published the result of their observations, rather than the observations themselves. Who does not know, however, that we may draw different conclusions from the same facts? Who does not know that when one labors for science, he should exhibit the basis

upon which he founds his results? And, indeed, what is the experience of one family, even though it be a family of such rare endowments?

It seems to me astonishing that, while the science of Astronomy has been cultivated with a perseverance so admirable, mankind have never studied infancy methodically. The most important of all problems, is perhaps that which has been least regarded with constant and rigorous attention. How many men are there who, with their telescopes, night and day, confirm the predictions of astronomers! How many others who keep an exact register of the wind, of the heat, and of the rain! How many indefatigable commentators! And in this number there is not found one father who has thought it worth his while carefully to note the progress of his own child! Even in the physical part, which it seems must needs fall more immediately under the inspection of the learned, how much uncertainty exists! Some practices, evidently pernicious, have been excluded, and this is undoubtedly a first step. They know better what it is necessary to avoid — but are they sure what they ought to do? Have they ever determined precisely the influence of the first nourishment which is given to children? Do they know if there is any reason in the prejudice which declares the mingling of different kinds of milk to be pernicious? Do they know even the effect of these kinds of milk, taken separately? Aulu-Gelle has said that kids nourished by sheep, have the softest hair; and that lambs nursed by goats, have the harshest wool: but has this fact been ascertained?

After such indifference, we ought not to be astonished, that more complicated questions have not been resolved by means of observation. It may be asked if it is expedient to subject children to the empire of physical habits, or if, on the contrary, we ought to free them from it?

Shall we brave their prolonged cries in submitting them to a certain regimen, such as the use of a cold bath, for example; or is their aversion an intimation to which we should always yield? Is it best to choose their food, or endeavor to acustom the stomach to all kinds of nourishment? Ought we to proscribe all mechanical means to protect the head from blows, and to prevent other accidents of a similar nature? What are the influences from which it is decidedly necessary to preserve children; and what, on the contrary, are those, of which we should make them endure the inconveniences in order to harden them? Innumerable doubts on the best manner of preserving health, present themselves to the mind of mothers, which succeed in distracting more easily than in deciding them; and for want of knowing how to transmit their experience, successive generations transmit their perplexities.

If we approach the moral domain, every thing becomes more uncertain, and still more critical; but, with discernment, what inexhaustible sources of knowledge might not be found in the study of little children! what a multitude of doubts might not be resolved, or at least enlightened by careful observation! It might be ascertained if exercises that strengthen the body, have a favorable effect upon the mind also; if the increase of corporeal vigor corresponds in general with that of moral energy, we might learn what are the agents which develop both, or cause a mutual paralysis. That dependence on our senses, to which authors have endeavored to subject the human intelligence, would be either acknowledged or controverted with more justice; and if the origin of ideas remained obscure, the first sign of their birth would be at least discovered. Bonnet and Condillac, in a very different spirit, but by means of the same fiction, have sought to explain the mysteries of the intellect in animating a statue. How much more would they really have advanced science, if they had

studied a new-born infant! What curious discoveries on the existence of instinct among men, on the formation of language; in a word, on the whole history of the human mind, would these young beings furnish!

It is undoubtedly necessary to beware of precipitate conclusions, and we can prove nothing from solitary examples. But as every body knows, that in multiplying observations abundantly, accidental differences become obliterated; and that the peculiar qualities of the individual disappear before the attributes of the species, experience on a great scale would be one of the most efficient means of instruction.

It is necessary to make our observations systematically: we should have, in the immense multitude that we know, that which would furnish most valuable data. The results of different educations are every where found in the spirit so strongly characterized in religious sects, in that which determines the several professions, notwithstanding the late period at which men ordinarily embrace them. It is also right to suppose that if we better knew the general customs among all nations, of raising children from the earliest age, we should find in a great measure the diversity of national character explained, and that the effects justly attributed to the differences of climate and of race, would appear of small importance compared to those of education. The misfortune is, that they tell us always of the methods, and never of the good or bad success of their experiments. They tell us very eloquently what they have done, but not whether they had reason to do it; and among all who have arrived at the age of manhood, we forever remain ignorant, which have been systematically educated.

It is true that we judge of the education by its results: it is necessary, however, to take into the account the influence of political institutions, and those of various causes,

that act so powerfully on the young man at his entrance into life. The question in this respect becomes much more complicated, since none can entirely escape the predominant spirit of his age and country. But as the first impulse may be strong enough to modify all the others, and to impress on them a salutary tendency, there always remains in the domain of religion, of morality, and of knowledge, something that may be attributed to early education. Among all the varieties of opinions, and customs, good and judicious instructors generally form enlightened and honest pupils. If adults in any considerable number fail in qualities essential to the happiness of society, and of man, we can boldly pronounce that there has been some secret defect in the manner in which their infancy was governed; and on this subject there remains a vast field for observation.

The uniformity of the products of civilization, actually cause us to forget two important things — that people less enlightened than we are, differ infinitely among themselves in character—the other, that the child has an almost equal aptitude to clothe itself in the character of each of these people. I do not certainly pretend to deny that there is a difference among the various races, even in a moral respect. Tacitus, who agrees on this point with our modern literati, believed that these differences were accidental, and that they almost disappeared after a few generations, when the cause which produced them ceased to act. But supposing them to be more permanent, it is nevertheless certain that the same education will establish a thorough conformity in a thousand respects between children of all countries, who are trained together. With regard to habits and manners, each new-born child might become with equal facility a Chinese, a Laplander, or an Englishman — such is the great flexibility of our nature! Past ages are as nothing to the child. If he is not a stranger to evil, he is to the

progress of corruption in the world; and he might be formed for the golden age, (such, at least, as men have represented it,) perhaps more easily than for the age in which we live.

It would seem, then, that among this multiplicity of possible methods of education we should have only to make our choice — that in taking from each method what is best in it, we might gather together in the person of the child, all that the flowers of the human race offer to our admiration. This hope is undoubtedly chimerical — but notwithstanding an attentive examination of the means employed to obtain every desirable result, would be more useful than it is believed to be. If for each and all, moral evil is inevitable, the quantity of it may be infinitely diminished. When we consider that the Quakers among their numerous population seem almost to have annihilated even a passion so natural as anger, how does it increase the idea of our power over children!*

Can we ever elevate education to the rank of science? can we bring it to sure and certain results, by classing and arranging facts concerning children according to select and fixed principles? I know not; but the limits of uncertainty will become much circumscribed and contracted. I believe education will remain an art — that is to say — an assemblage of means, in which a certain skill,

* Let each mother ask herself whether she has never by word, look or action, exhibited before her child emotions which she would be sorry to see reflected from its own mind — whether she has never in its presence appeared gloomy, fretful, angry, or impatient? Alas! we are never so completely humiliated as when we feel that with all our efforts to render our children perfect, our very example stamps upon them the imperfections of our fallen nature! But if those who do strive to teach virtue both by precept and example, sometimes fail, what can we expect from such as never reflect at all upon their duty to their offspring? [Ed.]

a certain adroitness, will succeed. The art will never be thoroughly taught in books — and the influence of man with man, the talent to make themselves beloved and obeyed, and to subjugate the will, must always distinguish some from others. But even an art has fixed principles, and public education might become something more certain than an art. Methods are more likely to succeed, in which individual differences lose themselves in the mass; and the play of this great machine does not depend entirely, either on the pupils over whom it acts, nor on the masters that move it. But how much is yet to be done for the perfection of such an instrument by comparing experiments and proofs!

These two kinds of education call for two different studies — that of children considered separately, and that of children collected in sufficient numbers to exert a strong influence upon each other — and that by an effect similar to that of fermentation — the elements of their moral nature combining in each of them in a new and peculiar form.

The study of children, considered separately, should begin with birth. It is clear that mothers alone can give themselves to this with success. Their relation, and the peculiar gifts which distinguish them, alike fit them to observe infants. It is necessary that a woman should have a pliant spirit to follow these changeable beings in their perpetual variations — every thing with them is so fugitive and vague, that a sort of vertigo would soon seize upon the observer who should endeavor to portray all their varying features. This study does not consist in a simple examination. If one has not that flexibility of imagination which can clothe itself with a foreign nature, be himself and another at the same time, he can never become acquainted with these young beings. It is still more necessary to love them, in order to comprehend

them, and they may be known much more readily through the avenues of the heart, than of the understanding. But when we do nothing else but follow the current of their feelings, and, if I may so speak, live in them; all the impressions that we have in a measure received, are too easily effaced. We become, from sympathy, light as they, and the task which we had prescribed to ourselves, is soon lost in forgetfulness.

To succeed in fulfilling it, I earnestly exhort young mothers to keep an exact journal of the development of their children. When they have not more extended views, they will always find one great advantage in this employment. It will give collectedness to their ideas, and fixedness to their projects. It will accustom them to observe attentively, and to explain what they discover.

In a very distinguished work, the 'Annals of Education by M. Guizot,' there are fragments which exhibit a true example of the art of penetrating into the nature of children, and of assigning to their conduct its true cause. These fragments, which bear the title of the journal, offer to view the result of much valuable observation.* As to talent, it is much more than I demand; but with respect to its nature, it is not exactly what I have in view. I would have an accurate journal, where the gradual progress is noted down, as well as all the vicissitudes of physical and moral health, and where we might find, by regular dates, the advancement of a child in all its faculties. The words

* Most of these observations have been laid down anew in 'Letters on Domestic Education,' which obtained the prize awarded by the Academy. This work, to which Madame Guizot has put her name, manifests in the highest degree that penetration of mind, that talent at discussion, and that noble elevation of moral sentiment, which characterize the productions of the same author, and render her premature death an event so deplorable. [Ed.]

ideas, perceptions, feelings — all that is acquired or developed, should be noted in this journal — we should then discover the first trace either of virtues or defects, and could thus be able to judge of their origin. In order to represent children, it would be necessary to relate their history.* The history of little events — of the joys and sorrows of their age would animate the journal, and the mother would soon find a great delight in writing it. The most simple foresight would make her feel that she is laying up for the future, the recollections of a delightful era. It would be so sweet to arrest the fugitive images of infancy, to prolong indefinitely the happiness of contemplating its traits, and to be sure of having restored to us at any time these cherished beings, whom we lose, alas! as *children* — although we may be blessed in having their lives preserved to us.

But of how much more general and immediate importance would a similar labor be, if it were executed by the principals of the great establishments for education. They only see children in mass; as mothers only see them in detail. What principles of ever active improvement might not be gathered from a thorough examination of the effects of the various methods they employ! In institutions of education, the action of such a principle is very necessary, in order to contend against the spirit of indolence, which incessantly inclines children and even their masters to elude all difficulties, and to content themselves with appearances in order to keep pupils on a level with the rapid progress of human knowledge, which demands a proportional advancement in all the branches of instruction. And when comparative proofs shall have

* The Journal of a Mother in the Appendix, is an attempt at such a history. [Ed.]

made us decidedly reject the employment of certain means, it is to be presumed that others will present themselves to the mind, that may give to education an aspect entirely new.

Although institutions of education are very numerous in Europe, they have been drawn so much upon the same model, that there is but little in which to compare them, excepting as it respects the ability of the professors, and this can lead to no general improvement. But when establishments shall become multiplied, that are founded on principles entirely new, such as those of Messrs. Pestalozzi and Fellenberg, that of Father Girard in Switzerland, and Hazlewood school in England, then the great questions with regard to education will begin to be understood. We shall see, for example, if the influence of emulation, the moral effect of which is so justly distrusted by every scrupulous spirit, is absolutely indispensable to the greatest development of the mind: we shall know if we cannot prevail over it by the happy effects of example, carefully separating them, at the same time, from the evil effects of rivalry: and perhaps we may learn that, before all other motives, we may place in the foreground the culture of feeling and intellect. From the success of the method of mutual instruction in these new institutions, what ideas do we not receive of all that may yet be discovered, and perfected respecting education! And in relation to the formation of character, which is so much more important, what light is furnished by the new infant schools! When we see these establishments where more than a hundred children, from two to six years of age, contracting together habits of order, and receiving the first elements of instruction,—and throughout their plays and lessons, having neither tears, or cries, or quarrels, but constantly exhibiting the image of happiness,—we are astonished at the greatness of the results to be obtained

by the use of the simplest methods, and ask how it is possible that so many ages could have passed away, before we thought of them.

We are aware that it will always be difficult to establish an exact comparison between different systems of education. To succeed in doing this, it will be necessary, not only that those who apply themselves to the task should submit their owu attempts to a regular examination, of which they should publish the results; but moreover, it will be necessary to follow the pupils after the completion of their education, and to judge of it at last, by what they are in life. These researches are so delicate, and must necessarily be multiplied so much in order to render them conclusive, that we hardly dare flatter ourselves a sufficient number of observers will be found to undertake them.

But what can escape the spirit of investigation which distinguishes our age? an age, which alone has witnessed the union of two rare endowments; the knowledge, at once theoretical and practical, of that experimental philosophy which, since the days of Bacon, has given to the sciences such astonishing progress; and the will, ardent and steady to apply the discoveries which result from them, to the good of society. It is now understood that great works must be performed by united efforts, or division of labor. That which one man alone and one life could not complete, is perfected by other men, and other times. And in this day, when so many magnificent enterprizes are excuted for the sake of religion and humanity, why may we not hope, that some respectable association will be formed, that will undertake to resolve by facts the great problems of education?* What examination

* Such an association has been formed in our country by *one* sex, who are engaged in teaching, or preparing works to assist

more important, could ever be the object of human meditation! Is it not in the dominion of education that the greatest influence is exerted by one mind over other minds? by the present time, over the future?

There is one favorable circumstance that I cannot forbear to notice here. In all great cities there are numerous asylums for children, which offer subjects entirely new, and at the same time independent of parental authority. I speak of unfortunate foundlings. With them, there would be no previous impressions to apprehend, and we should only have to gather that, which we ourselves had sown. Moreover, we could do nothing but good to these poor beings, in trying upon them all innocent methods. Even if one occupied himself with the earliest age, and the poorer classes exclusively, the application of the different systems to considerable numbers of children, might throw important light upon the subject.

Among the obstacles which oppose themselves to the progress of education, there is one scruple worthy of notice. People fear they shall hazard something in attempting new experiments, and they believe at every time they do it they ought to adhere to that, which is presumed to be the best. But the question is, not that which is presumed to be, but that which *is* the best. We hazard something also in our opinions. There are undoubtedly dangerous experiments that should never be permitted; but when all shall be banished that ought to inspire distrust, the best will be at once for all to seek the truth.

To invoke the experience of future times is to say that I depend little on my own; uncertain and limited as it is every way, I hardly dare to quote it here. But although

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the business of education; their example might, with great propriety, and utility, be followed by the other sex, who to say the least, are not less extensively engaged in similar efforts. [ED.]

I may not expose facts, I shall at least have the merit of raising doubts. I shall single out uncertainties; I shall note difficulties. The best book in the present state of our knowledge would be, perhaps, a course of rational questions, to which the united labors of enlightened minds which have devoted themselves to education will furnish an answer fifty years hence.

CHAPTER II.

BIRTH AND THE FIRST MONTHS.

"Man has received from nature nothing but materials; but the simplicity of his origin is lost in the majesty of his history; the poverty of his elements in the magnificence of his works."

RIVAROL.

ALTHOUGH birth and death are constantly occurring in the course of nature, these events cease not to astonish us. They always confound the imagination, and carry it on to the borders of a region of mysterious things. Birth and Death, speak to us of two unknown worlds, which they seem to bring near to ours.

Nevertheless, the part which we take in these events is very different; — we associate ourselves with the dying; we suffer, we tremble with him whose destiny we must one day ourselves experience — while with the state of the infant we sympathize far less. Its aspect can soften us, but we cannot put ourselves in its place. The relation that we bear to infancy, belongs to a remote time, of which we have no recollection, and which has ceased to interest us. That which has nothing to do with our fears and hopes, will always remain indifferent to us.

All nations also have busied themselves with the state of the soul after death, and have thought very little of

what it was before birth. Even in the theory of metempsychosis, the imagination has interested itself but little in this respect; for it has but carried back in the far past, the changes of form which it has figured to itself in the future. It is true Herder tells us, that according to the ancient people of the East, the souls of those who were not yet born inhabited an obscure and tranquil region in the centre of the earth. There they presented no distinct form. There they waited for light — the moment when God should call them, and the hour of their birth should be announced. It is, he adds, the ancient night, into which Job would have rendered back his life.

These opinions seem to have remained buried in the East; at least the Grecian mythology does not support it.* It seems, however, that the brilliant imagination which has clothed in agreeable forms so many philosophical ideas on human destiny, might also have embellished that. And at the same time that ancient poetry represented to us, souls arriving in crowds on the shores of Acheron, like leaves driven by the winds of Autumn, it might also have painted the hosts of spirits which land on all parts of our earth, and which even in the most barbarous countries are always confided to maternal love.

But if, according to the opinion of the church, the soul is really a new creature, what ideas must we not conceive of that eternally originating force, which is incessantly producing beings from nothing! And whilst the Epicureans of all ages are pleased to consider the Divinity as the idle spectator of the effects of a first creation, what

* Anchises shows, it is true, to Eneas (Æneid, vii. v. 750,) the soul that must inhabit the bodies of his descendants; but as these souls had always lived on the earth, we can discover in it nothing but the remembrance of a metempsychosis, regulated by the taste of the poet. [Ed.]

immense action, on the contrary, must not be exerted by the inexhaustible focus, from whence life throughout the universe constantly emanates.

It has been already remarked that sorrow introduces man into the world, and accompanies him when he departs from it. A crowd of tumultuous sensations assail the soul upon its entrance. The air, like a rapid torrent, forces its way into the lungs of the child, and irritates them; the light dazzles his delicate eyes through the transparent veils which cover them; and although it is supposed he does not hear, it is difficult to believe that his own cries do not reach him. Thus the mysterious moment that plunges the soul into the vortex of life, brings to it suffering, dizziness, and vertigo: but very soon a sort of stupor, and sometimes a peaceable sleep, divest it of impressions which it cannot yet support.

Much time ordinarily passes before the soul begins to notice. All the movements of the child are half convulsive, and correspond to its internal sensations: there is but one of its actions which seem to have any design, and that is, to turn the mouth as if to seek its nourishment, and afterwards to suck that which is offered it: no other proof of instinct can be observed at its birth. Nevertheless it sees after eight days, for its eyes follow the light; it hears also, for sudden noises make it start; but it still exists a solitary being, and enters not into relation with the world in which it lives. Perhaps it refers all that passes outwardly to the internal sensations which it has experienced only in the maternal bosom. It would be then in certain respects like one who dreams, because it would have a train of impressions that could not be outwardly manifest. But there would be this difference, that in dreaming we attribute to exterior objects what really passes within ourselves, while the infant refers to internal sensations the effect produced on him by exterior objects.

We cannot, however, doubt that it is instinct which guides it. It is most probable that the infant at its birth is subjected to this great law, which forces the soul to take cognizance of a world of matter exterior to itself; only he distinguishes nothing clearly; all his perceptions are detached, and do not connect themselves in his brain. The forms which move before him are not presented in distinct images: his sight cannot appreciate distance, and perhaps like the one born blind, operated upon by Chesselden, he feels as if objects were in contact with his eyes.

It is possible that without an unperceived intervention of the judgment and the will, we might be in this respect similar to the infant. That it is so, might be suspected from two facts that I venture to cite, although they are, and the first particularly, somewhat difficult to verify: one is, that when we awake suddenly, there is an invisible moment in which we seem to see objects retiring from us, which proves that, upon the first impressions, we had supposed them near; the other is, that, in a state of extreme weakness, the sick often complain that all they see is too near them; it seems to them that images advance on them, that the walls of the apartment touch them; apparently because they have not strength to overcome the sensation.

What a difference there is between the man and the brute, in the first moments of life! How far above the child in intelligence is the little chicken, just hatched from the shell which we see run, scratch up the earth, distinguish, and pick out the grains of wheat that are mingled with the sand! How far above the child, is the young chamois, if it is true, as they say of it in the Alps, that the mother ready to be delivered, and pursued by the hunters, stops, brings forth her young, licks it once, and departs again immediately, flying with him across the snow and the precipices.

Yet even after the first months are passed, I am not inclined to believe the child as destitute of instinct as is ordinarily imagined; and I see in him many movements that sensation and experience certainly do not explain; such are the signs that announce to us the first dawning of his affections. Thus at the age of six weeks, the new-born child is yet a stranger in this world, and nothing exists in it, of which he has a distinct idea. He knows not that the objects he sees, are the same as those he touches; and whatever impression these objects cause in him, he knows neither how to reach, or to avoid them. Nevertheless, even at this point, so remote from development, the human countenance interests him; when nothing in the material world fixes his glance, sympathy already acts in him; a cheerful air, a caressing manner, win a smile from his lips; soft emotions evidently animate the little creature; and we, who know the meaning of the expression, are transported to find it in him. But who has told the infant that such an expression of the features indicates affection? How can he, to whom his own physiognomy is unknown, imitate that of another, if a correspondent affection has not impressed the same character upon his features? There is nothing here which belongs to the senses. The person near his cradle is not always his nurse; perhaps she has done nothing but trouble him, in subjecting him to disagreeable operations. It matters not! she has smiled upon him; he has felt that he was beloved, and he loves. It seems as if the new soul recognized another, and said to it, 'I know thee!'

Does not this phenomenon evidently belong to instinct? Is it not an effect produced by the same inexplicable presentiment, which makes the terrified chicken fly at the appearance of a black point scarcely visible, high in the air? The chicken, who has never seen the hawk,

anticipates cruelty and murder; the child, who has yet discerned nothing, foresees goodness and love.

We are struck with the slowness of the first progress in our species, because we compare it incessantly with that of the brutes; but if we refuse all instinct to the child, the promptitude of his development, must appear truly astonishing. When we think that the young man born blind, of whom I have spoken, aided by four senses, and by the analogy between them, guided by mature reason, and directed by men who could teach him how to use his new sense; when we think, I say, that this blind man was six months before he knew how to manage himself, with respect to external objects, and that after this time he often committed great errors, can we deny that the child must receive peculiar assistance when he begins to exert his faculties?

He is proportionably more advanced than the blind man; and though even ignorant that he has an apprenticeship to serve, he is better fitted to lead in the foreground the apprenticeship of the five senses. As we know that it is by means of the touch, that we rectify the errors of sight, it would not be necessary to tell the blind man that he must recognize with the hand, all the forms which he perceives: with the infant such a practice would be attended with danger, and could not even take place until he had begun to make use of his hands, which he does not do until he is five or six months old. However, when he is eight or nine, that is to say, after a much shorter experience than that of the blind man, he no longer deceives himself with respect to objects placed near him. And what various knowledge has he not acquired in the same time, before the means of enriching himself with that of others, by language, was in his possession? How does he astonish us still more by the facility with which he renders himself master of this acquirement? Any

common man whose vocabulary is not much more extended than that of a child of three years old who is well developed, would, if he was transported into a new country, employ the same three years in making himself master of a foreign language, and yet what immense advantages would he not possess in a thousand respects over this child? He is already familiar with the names of common things; he knows the use of language, and he knows its general structure. He endeavors, in short, *to instruct* himself, while the child does not think of such a thing.

If then the progress of children, on all points of their apprenticeship, equals that of a man directed towards one point only, is it not clear that there exists in their favor special dispensations; that is to say, that there is in them an unknown source of knowledge, which we may call instinct?

We talk too much of experience: it plays a part in certain respects, but it does not do every thing; its influence, which is of a nature to be continually enlarging, is distinguished in early infancy by its uncertainty and slowness: thus, in whatever belongs to its domain, children are forever repeating the same experiments; they have been shown five hundred times that to make an object stand erect, it is necessary to place it on its base, and they invariably lay it on the side: for three years together they spill liquids out of the vessel that contains them, before they understand that it is necessary to hold the vessel horizontally: it is because the association of ideas is very slight in them, except when their feeling is excited. In every thing that does not interest their little passions, experience is for a long time lost.

Is it asked what we shall gain for human nature, by giving it a share of the instinct of animals? There is every thing to gain for our dignity, I reply, if it brings one proof more against materialism. These questions have assumed importance, since many have endeavored

to explain, by sensations purely physical, all the phenomena of living beings. But what do they do with instinct in this system? From whence come, among animals, those fears and hopes which seem as a prophetic inspiration? How, without model, do they execute those wonderful constructions, of which some species only know the secret?

Will they tell me these are inexplicable facts? but that is precisely what I myself say — and in confessing the impotency of material causes, I am obliged to recognize an order of things more elevated. What matters it, that I admit the same for inferior creatures? If through the intelligence of a feeble bird, I catch a glimpse of the divine intelligence, I prostrate and humble myself. All that in every species is admirable in itself, and above the faculties that have been allotted to it, appears to me the effect of a sublime instinct; a direct ray from the light above. It is that which has given to the bird the idea of a nest; to the new-born infant, that of the affection he inspires; to man, that of perfection, of immortality, of infinity, of all that is too grand or too excellent for him to have met with on the earth: these are the involuntary and sacred feelings which are not only *in* him, but which constitute *him*, and without which he cannot comprehend himself.

How singular is the destiny of human opinions! Sceptics first wished to make the animal a machine; and when, afterwards, deceived by the similitude, they expected to reduce man to the same state, it is found that the example of the animal itself has destroyed the vain sophisms on which they wished to support themselves.

The more we study children, the more I believe we shall be forced to acknowledge in them innate tendencies;* the more we shall be convinced that there are laws

* The phrase, *innate tendencies*, might be ambiguous, had not the author explained that she means by it only a *susceptibility* of the

imposed in their minds, laws which the mind imposes in its turn on that which originates in feeling; and the more we shall discover that external objects but give an impulse or furnish aliment to the soul.

More than five months passes away before the child has an idea of taking up any thing with his hands; their design is for a long time unknown to him, and the extreme slowness with which he discovers it, proves that this discovery is with him the tardy work of experience. He looks at things, and interests himself in persons long before this time; and thus appears to have received more immediately the use of sight. Moreover, I cannot suppose with Berkley and other authors, that because the rays of light cross each other in the pupil of the eye, the infant begins by seeing objects reversed, and that he learns to correct them only by habit. Images, without doubt, are painted on his retina invertedly, as on ours; but when he is capable of comprehending that they represent real existences, he has already judged rationally of the position of all things. The sensations which preceded this moment, will always, to us, remain enveloped in an impenetrable cloud.

It is easy to observe the gropings of experience in the manner by which the infant learns to employ the sense of touch; that which he would seem likely to exert before the others, is slow to obey the orders of the will. He must in some degree receive the first notion of it from the sense of sight, by which afterwards he brings it to perfection. And this is the way it is accomplished.

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mind to receive ideas through the medium of the senses, and not the existence of *innate* ideas; — the latter opinion, since the expositions of Locke, has found few supporters, and must throw us back to the absurd doctrines of the realists. [Ed.]

As soon as the infant sees, he enjoys; after having smiled at faces, he soon smiles at every thing that strikes his eyes. The pleasure of looking at what is brilliant, agitates him. He flutters, gesticulates, and it often happens that his hand encounters the thing that attracts his attention. Then he experiences an unexpected sensation; he is astonished that an obstacle stops his movements: at last, when a return of the same causes has incessantly led to the same effects, he foresees what will be the result of his gestures. He then holds out his little hand with some design, but as he is not yet able to appreciate distances; to touch the object, or not to touch it, is a game of chance with him. By dint of repeating this game, he becomes a little more expert; but it is not until after he is seven or eight months old, that he can at once lay his hand upon the thing desired.

The hand which lays hold of objects, and, in doing it, measures distances, is certainly a very efficacious means for the child, to learn the world in which he lives. Contrary to the opinion of some authors, I believe, however, that before he can thus make use of it, he has already conceived the idea that the same body can be seen and touched at the same time; and the bosom that has nourished him has given him this idea. What makes me think so is, that we see him advance his mouth towards the objects that he wishes to touch, about three or four weeks before he does his hand; the habit also that he soon acquires of putting every thing that he takes hold of, in his mouth, will prove that the lips and the gums are with him the organ of touch, which is oftenest excited, and the most sensitive.

When the sensations of the infant are no longer unconnected; when sight and touch concur to give him an idea of the same object, he knows how to refer the most of his impressions to their proper causes, and the threshhold of

life is passed. The external world appears to him under its real form, and from that time his intellect makes rapid progress; but he has already commenced his first attempts at language, which it will be very curious to observe.

At about the age of six weeks, when the smile and the tears appear, we remark in the new-born infant a little murmur, which is very sweet. It is an expression of satisfaction, of comfort, which he utters when at ease. By degrees these sounds become more accented: they then present the genuine exercises of the voice; a warbling with which the child amuses himself, perhaps a confused imitation of the noise that we make in speaking to him. Rousseau has happily mentioned certain dialogues, in which the words of the nurse, and the inarticulate responses of the child, present nearly the same modulations: he often addresses this warbling to inanimate objects, which he does not distinguish from others; for he may deceive himself in seeing life where it is not, but he never can be unmindful of it where it is. It is sometimes a button of polished metal, sometimes a glass shining in the sunbeams, to which he speaks; he seems to tell them that they are pretty; that they give him pleasure: he seems to manifest love for them: sometimes he utters little joyous and piercing cries, as if to attract their attention; however, there is in this no real language, at least if we understand by this term, a means voluntarily employed to exert an influence: the child asks for nothing, he calls to nothing, he expects no effect from his music.

The true language of the infant is his cries: he utters them at first without design, obeying a law of his nature, which makes him pour out his grief in this manner. But when this grief has been often soothed, and its noisy expression has become allied with the idea of succor in the mind of the child, he cries for the purpose of calling it; — he has then entered the true province of language.

The animated gestures, the act of reaching towards the object of his desires, also commence with him involuntarily, and afterwards become imperative from habit.

The first words of the child are quite another thing. In pronouncing them, it pleases him to exercise a peculiar faculty—the power of attaching a sign to an object, and he exerts it without being moved either by want or passion. Does he see a dog pass in the street? he immediately speaks its name as well as he knows how—but he speaks it without any other motive than that of amusement: he is not actuated either by fear or hope. If he was afraid of the dog, he would weep; if he desired to have it near him, he would lean his body towards it, uttering impatient cries; but it is in a state of perfect tranquillity only that he names it; if he experiences the least emotion, he abandons words as a new and superfluous acquisition, and returns to his real language of cries and gesticulation. Speech is not yet an instrument for him, and it is only at a much later period that he makes it very useful.

It would certainly be very presumptuous to determine on the origin of language in the human species, from the first attempts of the faculty of speech among infants; however, as it has been often said that language was born of necessity, and that it was but cries brought to perfection, I am very glad to testify, that, at least, it is not thus with the child. I add, that he does not invent words himself; and that he does but repeat, and that badly, those which he has heard pronounced; he does not even call an animal by his cry, at least unless the example has been given him to do so. Thus language, in its rudest state, is the fruit of imitation or of teaching, and does not appear to be prompted by nature.

When the child is almost a year old, he lisps his first words, and tremblingly adventures his first steps. Al-

ways in a state of absolute dependence, he possesses less than all creatures living, of the same age, the means of watching over his own safety; and yet he already displays the two great prerogatives that elevate him much above the animal creation. The faculty, of which I have just been speaking, that of designating objects by established signs, has been often noticed; but there is another, although less remarked upon, which developes itself much sooner. I speak of that disposition so general in infancy, which induces the child to interest himself in a multitude of objects, entirely foreign to his instinct of preservation. At six months, he no longer lives concentred in himself; already the young existence manifests itself externally; already the mind begins to form those extended relations which must one day subject the material world to its dominion. The most intelligent animals have a circle of interests which is very limited; that which does not relate to their safety or subsistence, is as nothing to them: they love, but they do not admire; and curiosity is a stranger to them. The child, on the contrary, is amused with every thing: he has pleasures which we might call disinterested, there is so little in their nature which is sensual: the useful is nothing to him, and the beautiful already exists; such as he imagines it, he tells of it, and his eyes sparkle with admiration; his little voice breaks forth in hymns of praises, before he can discern what will be useful, or what will hurt him.

There are, I believe, in the history of animals but two facts which bear any analogy to this, and even in these cases the resemblance is deceptive: one is, that of the kitten, that appears to be diverted by stirring a suspended ribbon, or by rolling a paper-ball upon the floor; but as bodies in motion are all that attract his attention, there is every reason to believe that they respond to his instinct of hunting, and that he sees in them either mice, or the

signs of their presence: the other manifests itself among several little birds; the nightingale, for example, approaches brilliant objects, and descends from his bough to look at them; the lark is in the same way attracted by the lustre of glasses; but these are the effects of inquietude, of fascination, perhaps of the hope of food: we see not in them the expression of pure pleasure, like that which children manifest; *they* only feel real delight at the sight of beautiful objects; they only become attached to them, recognize them when they see them again, and conceive for them a sort of passion.

The pleasures of hearing are also vivid in young children: noise is in general agreeable to them, and, above all, music. We may remark on this subject that the pleasures of hearing belong not as exclusively to our species, as those of sight,—since birds, like ourselves, are sensible to harmony. This fact with respect to them, may perhaps indicate another, and it may not be impossible that the first musical impressions might leave traces as profound among men, as among birds. We know the effect which the first songs that they hear has upon these; creditable experience has taught us that the warbling of a bird, presents an exact repetition of the sounds he has listened to while very young; and that if we take from the nest the little one that is just fledged, and shut it up with a bird of a different species, it will adopt the song of its new companion.

It may be then that by frequently presenting to the ear of the young infant, clear and agreeable modulations, we might thus be spared a part of the care which we often so laboriously take to perfect its organs at an after age: it is at least certain that in families where music is habitually cultivated, new pupils are formed with great facility. We may also conjecture that the great difference between the musical dispositions of neighboring countries, as, for

example, the inhabitants on the opposite banks of the Rhine, are but the result of first impressions. The song, that charm so powerful to lull the griefs of infancy, would be also the means of developing the germ of a charming talent — a talent that is cultivated too much as an art, without sufficiently appreciating its moral influence, which was known and employed by the ancients much better than by us.

The intellectual education of infancy can consist only in a preparation for the future exercise of reason. The secret with respect to this, consists in fixing in the mind of the child, by the interest which we ought to have the art of exciting, perceptions otherwise too fugitive; it is essential that a collection of facts becomes imprinted upon his memory, which may at some future day furnish points of comparison for his judgment. But to collect these facts, it is necessary that he give his attention to them. Defect of attention in the pupil, and the confusion of mind that results from it, is the obstacle that a teacher oftenest meets with: this obstacle would be less liable to present itself, if the first impressions of the child had been clear and distinct. When his attention appears captivated by some object, care should be taken not to divert him from it: every thing which can excite his interest, or become a subject of observation, serves to develop his faculties.

We must not, however, seek to redouble the intensity of sensations purely material. We deaden or stupify the mind of the infant by stunning his feeble organs. To toss him violently, to tickle him, to strike forcibly before him on a table, to rap against a window, is to use rude and mechanical means which suspend his cries only by paralysing his faculties:* it is necessary, on the contrary, as

* And we might add, shaking a bell or rattle, loud and boisterous singing, and violent rocking, all of which the judicious and tender mother or nurse will avoid. [Ed.]

much as we can, to mingle intelligence and feeling in the diversions we procure for him. To caress before his eyes a dog or a cat, would be to develop that sympathy which the youngest children so easily feel for animals. To show him a beautiful object, and make him examine it in detail, would be to strengthen his attention, and also to excite in him admiration, one of the finest emotions of the soul. To make him observe and recognize imitated figures, would be to awaken imagination in him; — there is, in short, a thousand means of calling forth his budding faculties. When once the mind has been brought into play by some impression, it associates itself with it; it unravels it; it gives clearness and precision to it while so occupied; and it is thus that the mind forms and exercises itself. To vary without excess the sensations of the child, and to call into action the moral powers as much as possible; such is the education of the mind in infancy. There is also one for the heart, which it is as much more important to cultivate, as the dispositions that favor it are more fugitive.

CHAPTER III.

DISPOSTIONS TO BE CULTIVATED IN THE FIRST YEAR.

"To love, is the beginning of morality."—DUPONT DE NEMOURS.

To cultivate happy dispositions; to give to them that fixedness and permanence, which entitles them to the name of qualities; to raise these to the rank of virtues, by imprinting upon them the seal of religion; such, in relation to the formation of character, is the gradual progress of a good education.

In early infancy, we can employ ourselves only about the dispositions of the child. Some of these may be cultivated, at an era, when it is yet impossible to combat any. At all ages also, the best means of overcoming, or at least of enfeebling bad inclinations, is to give continual exercise to others.* 'Overcome evil by good,' is the admira-

* Would that this truth might be impressed upon the minds of all mothers; and then instead of correcting their children, only to awaken in them bad passions, we should see them more frequently diverting their attention from what is wrong, by gently presenting some new object. A mother was one day correcting her little daughter of two years old—the child with her tiny hands returned the blows in her mother's face. 'Emily,' said the lady, 'can you be so naughty as to strike your mamma?' 'Ma' strike Emily,' answered the child, with a resentful look. This was the result of a

ble precept of the gospel, and comprises the whole secret of education.

In order sufficiently to feel the importance of the first year, it is necessary to think of the power of education, and the limits of this power: the effects of our cares are limited, because we are only able to apply them to unequal faculties, that are not all susceptible of the same development. The germs of all the human dispositions have been given to the infant by nature, but these germs have not all the same vigor. The feeble languish or decay when circumstances are opposed to them: the strong resist the influence of circumstances the most unfavorable, and if culture is given to them they push out immense shoots. In every individual the development of each faculty has an assigned limit which it cannot pass; it is the province of education to enable him to attain unto this limit, or to prevent him from arriving at it. It is then only by the relative progress of the moral faculties, that we may influence him; but that alone would give us very great power, if we knew the proper time to use it.

I know not if the first impressions are the strongest; the extreme inconstancy of children would lead me to doubt it; but the first moments are the only ones when we can be almost sure of placing in advance the developments which we wish to cultivate; it is then that we have the greatest chance of obtaining an influence over the measure of the various inclinations; that is to say, over the character.

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feeling which is natural to all living creatures. The cat or dog, when treated kindly, return, in their way, the gentle emotions; if beaten, they scratch or bite, or growl their resentment. And can we expect that the little beings, who are men and women in miniature, can, by a process of reasoning, bring their passions into subjection, to submit even to legitimate authority, when exercised in a way, calculated to inflame their passions? [Ed.]

It is very important to settle beforehand our ideas on the dispositions that we desire to cultivate: if we surrender it entirely to nature, we leave all which she has sown with her hands to grow at random. Here is the inconvenience of that negative education, which we so much love to boast of. When we have determined that nothing shall be done, either to promote, or retard, or, as Rousseau says, 'que rien ne soit fait' (that nothing shall be done,) habits will be formed before we think of it; we shall discover unexpected shoots which will quickly supplant those we hoped to obtain; we shall be obliged to submit so much the more promptly to the necessity we had been anxious to avoid, that of correction and restraint; we shall enter upon the prohibitory regimen, a resource sad and uncertain. It is delightful to be employed only with the education that upholds and encourages propensities; that which represses and restrains them, always comes too soon for the mother, and often too late for the child.

There are flatterers of human nature, whom I will not at this time stop to refute. I will not examine if all the natural inclinations are of themselves lawful, if those that we call selfish or malevolent, are of indispensable utility for the defence or the preservation of the individual. As far as they are necessary they are indestructible, and being fatal to morality, and consequently to happiness, whenever they pass this point, they are the enemies that education ought naturally to combat. In the social state, they always present themselves in excess, and are of such force that it is necessary to restrain and control them.

Happily, from the tenderest infancy we may cultivate dispositions which either oppose or develop dangerous inclinations. Certain habits which have a salutary influence on the moral tendencies, may be given to the infant even before his character distinctly manifests itself. A calm and tranquil state of mind will quench the restless

activity of his desires; benevolence will direct his attention from himself, and make him feel in harmony with his species. Such dispositions are easy to take care of; we may call them natural, since it is only necessary to banish whatever disturbs them; and they are at the same time the first in date, and the most important to cultivate.

A state of inward calm is produced by means of the outward, and for this reason, among a thousand, it is always very necessary to keep little children from weeping. This is something that scarcely needs recommending to mothers, but perhaps they do not sufficiently study the means of succeeding in it; and they attribute to chance, many of the cries that are not without a real cause.

Our influence over the dispositions of children is so early, that we confound the effects of it with those of their constitution. According to Condillac, habits differ from natural inclinations, because they have a beginning; but the distinction is not easy to establish, since we have never succeeded in detecting the beginning of habits: they are liable to form themselves with singular promptitude; and physical cares regularly bestowed, as they ought to be, often cause them. Two events having followed each other in immediate succession three or four times; the first will immediately give birth in the child to the expectation of that which ought to follow, and a multitude of pleasures and pains result to him from it, of which we are the authors. I have said that the lessons of experience make slow progress in infancy, because it is long before the child can draw a conclusion from the facts which he knows, sufficiently general to enable him to decide in new cases. This is an act of the judgment above his understanding; but he retains a simple remembrance of the association of impressions which succeed each other. These become promptly and involuntarily connected in the brain. There is, then, from the earliest age, more that

results from education than is thought for, and the part which nature plays is difficult to determine.

The surest way for a vigilant mother is always to suppose that tears have a cause: if she carefully seeks it, she will find much more foundation for the grief, than she imagines. Little children, whatever people say, are not capricious; a hope disappointed, a suffering felt or foreseen, is almost always the reason of their cries.

One means of preventing them will be to have as much regularity as possible, in the daily routine of life; for, during infancy the utility of habit cannot be contested. When the same impressions succeed each other in the same order, the most painful will be thereby softened, and the expectation of those which are agreeable will never be deceived. Little children are extremely sensitive to mistakes on this subject, which become to them a source of bitter tears. Their passions, too strongly excited, also have vent by weeping; and it is better to keep them from violent emotions, even though agreeable ones. Consequently, it will be salutary to avoid making them a witness to the preparations for their meals.* Desire, sharpened by the sight of the object that can appease it, becomes in them a painful eagerness. The certainty that this desire will be satisfied, does not calm them, and hope is at that time rather a pain than a pleasure.

With these, and other similar cares, we shall be able to maintain in children an habitual calm of the soul, which

* We cannot agree with the author in this; we have seen a child of ten months, watch its nurse as she poured milk into a basin, put bread into it, and then wait with patience till it was warmed at the fire: — at first, it could scarcely be pacified, when the operations began, through its eagerness; but at length it comprehended that a certain process was to be gone through, at the end of which its desires for food were to be gratified: — this was a lesson for patience. [Ed.]

is of immense benefit, and yet easily lost, the most essential perhaps to their moral constitution, yet frail and fluctuating. The nerves once violently shaken, are a long time in being restored; the health and the character equally change. There is in every one a class of faculties, and the most elevated, perhaps, which grow and ripen only in the tutelary shade of repose: this has relation to our finest intellectual endowments, as well as to our virtues. There is nothing admirable, nothing great in moral nature, of which serenity does not favor the development.

Serenity! charming word, which is applicable only to heaven and the soul, and seems to establish relations between them; a state of existence where harmony reigns, where the heart is at peace with itself and the universe! In this perfect equilibrium, an intelligent mind easily exerts its empire; our various impulses become regulated, and harmonize with the eternal government. Why is this disposition so rare at the present day? Why is it necessary to seek, in the remembrances of antiquity, this *Je ne sais quoi*, (I know not what) of pure, of elevated, of tranquil, which calms and exalts the soul? Whence comes it that we meet it in the rustic laborer rather than in more accomplished minds? In the less complicated social relations, does man imbibe more easily the soft tint of that nature which surrounds him, and can he not find harmony even in the plenitude of his development?

However it may be, if we do not disturb it, this happy disposition will always be found in infancy. It shines with a pure lustre in the eyes of the child; it reposes upon his expanding forehead. One, in whom reigns this sweet serenity, seems glad to live; — to breathe, to see, to move his little arms, is already a happiness for him. He welcomes all nature with gratitude; it seems as if the young spirit took wing, and flew to meet her benefits. Let us not touch him; let us leave the child to delight

himse.f with her; let us fear to check the sweet harmony that is formed within him. As long as his look, full of intelligence, proves that his mind is occupied, let us never interrupt the train of his ideas. Let us beware of restraining his mental activity; it is more real and salutary, than that which comes from us.

I believe that we often agitate chlidren too much: it is not best to leave them to become weary, I grant: ennui is a lethargy of the soul; but that which incessantly leads to such a malady, is the excess of the diversions that we believe it necessary to give to young infants. One extreme gives birth to its opposite, and calm situations are the only ones that become indefinitely perpetual. The more serenity a child has had, the more he will desire it; this disposition may be permanent, but it is not so with gaiety. Even with the children who love her much, joy is a passing inhabitant of this world; she touches it with a light foot. It is necessary to receive her always kindly, sometimes gently to call her; but when she is once arrived, we ought not to animate her too much. Immoderately excited, she brings tears in her train,* she agitates too violently the delicate fibres, which vibrate soon after in an opposite extreme.

Consequently it is better to occupy little children with things, than with persons. It is not, as I have said, that

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* Thus we see when a child is carried much in the arms, it cries when the exercise ceases; and many mothers are so careless of the future, as to indulge their infants in a habit of no advantage to themselves, and of great trouble to those who take care of them. A well-managed child after being carried abroad either to ride or walk, will often cry on being brought within doors, but having never gained any thing by its cries, it soon stops and turns its attention to something within its own grasp. But the wise mother soon discovers that too much excitement, by means of new objects, tends to disturb her child's serenity. [Ed.]

the distinction can be manifest to their eyes, but at least things are among the tranquil objects which do not excite them. With them, they make experiments, without thinking of it; their judgment ripens by involuntary observations. With persons, on the contrary, their lives partake of sympathy and antipathy. The action which living beings exert over each other, puts all their passions in play, and even this action is so much the more animated, inasmuch as with children there is no communication of thought, and every thing passes in the dominion of feeling. Every one of their impressions producing an effect and obtaining a response, all their desires are expressed as soon as conceived; hence tears and anger are of necessity perpetually changing situations. The impossibility of fixing upon any amusement, upon any train of ideas; a fatiguing inquietude; that impatience, that mental disturbance so injurious to all; a state of irritation, injurious to the health also, are the results of the action too long continued which we exert over these little beings, and that we permit them to exert over us.

An infant of six months, half lying in his cradle and playing with his little hands, is in the happiest situation; it is the same at nine or ten months, when seated on a thick carpet, he amuses himself with dispersing various objects, that he endeavors afterwards to catch again. While he is thus playing, you can return to your occupations; a look, some token of intelligence from time to time, is sufficient to tell him that he is protected, and his security is perfect. Never deceive such a feeling. Go to him, if he appears to suffer, or if his mental action begins to languish, he can no longer amuse himself with what surrounds him. Then, however, do not hasten, and endeavor to give a short exercise to his patience: try to make him attach a meaning to this simple word, — *wait.* If this word has always expressed a sacred promise, he

will learn from it gradually an important signification: the child will comprehend that you are decided to succor him, but that you have a vocation yourself, that he ought to receive and not exact, and he will be more grateful and more tractable for it.

A skilful German physician, M. Friedlander, was astonished on arriving in France, to see to what extent they endeavored to excite the vivacity of little children.*

'It appears to me,' says he, 'that mothers play too much with their children in the first era of life, and that they too early excite their vivacity. In Germany, we often hear mothers recommending it to their children to keep still.'

What reflections are not suggested by this simple observation! Who can determine the influence of this difference of conduct! Who shall say if the remarkable preponderance of the active faculties among one nation, and of the contemplative among the other, may not be assigned to this same cause, which is reproduced under various forms during the course of education. Do we know what we are doing, when we accelerate the progress of the faculties in one of the great divisions of moral being, and thus comparatively retard them in the other. Can we judge to what extent the ones thus neglected, are of themselves necessary, and how far necessary to counterbalance others? It is undoubtedly difficult to give exercise at pleasure to the faculties which, as their name indicates, are purely passive or contemplative, but always require time and tranquillity for their development.

I know there are times of indisposition and suffering, when we are obliged to divert children, and thereby keep them in motion. But because there is something opposed

* Annals of Education by M. Guizot, Vol. i. p. 49.

to the execution of the best plans, we ought not therefore to lose sight of them. Mothers can acquire the talent of breaking habits gaily, and taking advantage of happy moments to recommence anew. Every thing is of consequence in education, and nothing is irreparable; this is a truth we cannot know too much.

From serenity will naturally spring benevolence, another precious disposition which cannot be too highly valued. In the healthiest state of the child, when the feeling of existence is at once calm and animated, all the natural sympathies act in him. An invincible attraction unites him to his species; the bond of humanity binds his soul to theirs. We are made for attachments; it pleases us to commence together; the wonderful gift of language, sufficiently proves it. Love is the best thing in this life, it will also be our portion and reward in eternity. It is therefore to follow an indication of Providence as well as to fulfil a sacred duty, when we open the heart of the child to the sweet affections which must enrich his two existences. And if a feeling too intense is often in this life a source of pain; if it already costs the child many tears when he dwells exclusively on a single object,—benevolence, that temperate disposition, by expanding in him more and more, will moderate its excess.*

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* This feeling of benevolence, or general good will, is better cultivated by letting a child become the alternate care of different individuals, than where a mother or a nurse devote themselves almost wholly to it; in the latter case, it fears the sight of strangers, refuses to be caressed even by the other members of the family, becomes exacting and tyrannical towards the being over whom he finds he possesses such vast power. Although he may for this individual show much affection, it is a selfish one; he loves her because she is necessary to him. When the child is accustomed to the offices and attentions of several, he becomes familiar with them, sometimes sees them engaged in other occupations than serving him,

We do not expatiate sufficiently on the happiness attached to benevolence; attention has been given to the sweetness of being the object of it, more than to that of experiencing the feeling. Nevertheless, he who is deeply imbued with its spirit is happy above all others, and the expression of contentment has already found a home in his features. If we analyze the various agreeable expressions of the human face, perhaps we shall find that they all participate of the expansive nature of benevolence, that all possess this charm which dilates the heart; a regard to mere personal interest then, should incline every individual to cultivate this happy disposition, if he cannot be impelled to it from nobler motives.

In this respect, much of education which has been careful in appearance, has been very imperfect. What a difference is there in regard to benevolence in different families! for it is always by families that we find individuals grouped together under this relation also. There are those where a mere stranger receives a cordial welcome; where a glow of kindness shines on every countenance at his appearance: there are others where more refined manners scarcely conceal a cold repulse. Benevolence is however a rural disposition, which often becomes lost in the crowded city. Why do we cultivate so little, that which would remove so many obstacles, that which would so infallibly gain the heart, which would so easily supply the place of the hundred thousand rules of etiquette, and would prepare children for the exercise of that Christian charity, which is the true spirit of our duty towards man?

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and learns to know what it is to love without selfishness, or to expect that those whom he loves are always to be devoted to him. This is a lesson that mothers, as wives, should understand themselves, as well as teach to their children. [Ed.]

The fact is, we do not think of cultivating it. When by chance, it exists, it is because we have permitted it to do so; not because we have called it into being. We love better to prescribe than inspire; we supply the place of feeling by precept, and our frigid mode of education is reduced to the art of restraining.

This art is however insufficient of itself. Our prohibitions are always too numerous to be observed, and too few to apply to every fault. We would not assuredly desire our children to be subject to excesses of passion or violence, but the number of blameable acts being infinite, we cannot foresee them all in order to interdict them. It is necessary then to address ourselves to impulses. It is only through the heart, that we produce a salutary effect at any age, and in infancy, it is sympathy alone that we can call into action. But as the propensity to imitation, the natural result of sympathy, can actuate either to good or bad, it is as essential to bring children under the influence of feelings of benevolence as to preserve them from those of hatred and malignity.

In relation to this last, if to none else, some mothers have been well informed. All who have reflected on education, have felt the extreme importance of avoiding every act of impatience or of anger — every harsh accent, or stern look that might strike the senses of little children. 'A nurse' says M. Edgeworth, 'influences the disposition of the whole life. Children possess an inconceivable facility to receive inclinations, and partake impressions of which they are yet incapable of appreciating the cause. Countenances speak to them, when as yet they do not comprehend words.' Here is an indication for mothers, and this sympathy is a power that is given to them over beings destitute of reason. By surrounding children with smiling faces, expressive of sweetness, and benevolence, we may soon communicate to their affectionate feelings.

No one knows how much we may gain towards gentleness of character by using means like these; they are such as are employed by the Quakers, and we ought to take example from them in this respect. A very attentive mother, who observed such precautions, told me that during the first year of her daughter's life, a child of extreme vivacity, no trace of anger could be perceived in her. It is a rule of English education, always to speak very low to little children.

Although the means of cultivating happy dispositions are well known, and I have in part pointed them out myself, I will, nevertheless, retrace them here. The first, which regards tranquillity, and this tranquillity mingled with joy called serenity, consists in causing peace to reign around the child, and if possible to surround it with agreeable and tranquil objects; the second, to place about him those persons only, in whom such dispositions actually exist, as we would wish to excite in him. I say actually, for affectation is here perfectly useless. Nothing equals the coldness of children towards hypocritical demonstrations, if not in sympathy with their natural inclinations. The last means, in fine, when such disposition as benevolence or friendship is of a nature to manifest itself by acts, is to fix it in the spirit of the child, by obtaining from him some material proof of his sentiments.

This last means, which is very powerful, ought to be employed with discretion, for otherwise it will produce an unfavorable effect. Do we wish, for example, to familiarize the little child with a new-comer, at whose near approach he has been frightened? it is necessary at first, that the stranger retire a little. When he is at some distance, if he assume a gracious air, and solicit a smile, we shall see the little countenance brighten insensibly, but something of fear still remains upon it. The nurse gently advancing him forward, we shall in a few moments

see the child playing in the arms of him, whom he had at first feared; but if she attempted to seize the little hand, and put it prematurely in an unknown hand, the child would utter cries of fear, and would not see the stranger for a long time without repugnance. Thus, in cutting short a budding disposition, she would have implanted hatred, in the place of love.

Similar examples are incessantly renewed in education, and in regarding them with attention we shall see how often they are presented to us in life. The study of the hearts of these young infants, is more instructive for ours than we fancy. We find in them all our involuntary sensations, all our first impressions. Imagination is in its nature eternally young, and the child always lives in the man, although every man does not exist in the child.

CHAPTER IV.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SECOND YEAR.

"The sensations accompany man at his entrance into the world, and encompass him on every side; imagination, memory, and judgment, by degrees establish their empire, and people the desert where feeling reigned alone."—RIVAROL.

SEVERAL months usually pass away before the child who has begun to speak, has made great progress in language. He learns, from time to time, a new word; but as long as these words remain scattered in his brain, and he is unable to connect them together, the acquisitions that he makes of this kind, appear quite independent of his moral development, and have not much influence with regard to it.

Nevertheless, this development is progressing, it advances even rapidly. If we could measure the steps of intelligence, the first would appear the most wonderful. The young faculties seem to pass as if by magic over an immense distance; that which separates the purely sensitive life of the child, from the intellectual life of the man: at the age of which I speak, this step is not yet taken, but is about to be. Desires, affections, pains, pleasures, every thing is ardent, every thing is ingenuous in the child; he

resembles us in many points, but he does not think in words, and it is in this respect, above all, that he differs from us.

It is with difficulty we can conceive such a manner of existence: language is to us so familiar, that it forms a part of ourselves, and we know not what we should be without its assistance. Man is, to use the expression of the Hebrews, a speaking soul: the succession of ideas is but slightly interrupted within him. Children and animals are not so; the same *things* present themselves to their minds, and not the terms which are the signs of them. For them to think, is to see again; it is to experience the sensations which the real object would have excited. Every thing passes in their heads in pictures, or rather in animated scenes, where life is partially reproduced. As the various impressions, and even the emotions, are the great means of development in infancy, the child has been endowed with a singular avidity to seek them, to multiply them without ceasing; every thing which promises a renewal of them gives him pleasure. He has a passion for walking — he runs towards the door with vivacity, and the mere sight of his hat transports him. If we are to take him out in a carriage, he flutters with such impatience, that we can hardly hold him. The commotion in, and about him, is his joy.

It is not only present objects which act upon the infant; their ideal representation also often possesses the same power; if he is seized with an ardent desire for something, every other feeling is for the moment suspended: we endeavor to divert him; but he sees not, he hears not, and his mind is wholly fixed upon the image of the object which can satisfy his wishes. Even when not under the influence of any passion, the scenes which he has witnessed may be renewed in his imagination, and agitate him. A child who has been much amused during the

day, cannot be lulled to sleep in the evening; his eyes shine with a bright lustre; a deep red tinges his cheeks; his faculties, unquestionably too violently exercised, are so occupied, that silence and darkness cannot make him feel any weariness.

This existence, in all things external, as well as in all present or remembered impressions, is prolonged beyond the period when the child begins to talk. Numerous traces of it remain in youth, and we may find it at every age in men of imagination. In these, the succession of distinct thoughts is less active than that of pictured scenes, and the feelings which accompany them.* We are affected in a similar mannner during our dreams. There all is action, emotion, imagery: we are rather enthusiasts than reasoners, and I doubt whether the most philosophic heads occupy themselves much in their sleep with seeking after truth.

These results of the quickness of sensation in a young soul can easily be conceived; but why is it that we are not more astonished at the facility with which the young child enters into the sphere of the moral world? Causes altogether immaterial, — causes, the action of which suppose a development much more advanced than his own,

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* The insane, in whom imagination becomes more vivid as the light of reason fades, often experience this renewal of past impressions so strongly as to believe that the scenes of other days or of years long past are existing before them; and we sometimes hear them addressing, and as it were, holding conversations with friends who have long been dead — they weep or laugh, according to the nature of the images before them; — one female who labored under a malady of this nature for years, seemed to live almost wholly in the past. On one occasion she laughed immoderately, and was then heard to say, 'Oh grandmother, how queer you look in that litle red cloak.' Her grandmother had been dead thirty years. [Ed.]

produce upon him inexplicable effects. Our impressions, our feelings are transmitted to the child, by means of indications so light and irregular that we do not know how he derives intelligence of them. Therefore it has not surprised those who for want of reflection think it natural that children should be like us; and therefore it has hardly been observed by those whose occupation it is to search into causes.

To have recourse to instinct, is undoubtedly to abandon the elucidation of such mysteries; but it is however to instinct alone that we can have recourse. It was necessary that there should be a supernatural means, as it were, to hold communication with the child before he could follow the long route of associating signs with ideas; we may also recognize in him a faculty almost of divination, that sympathetic comprehension which keeps him in the current of our feelings. The same faculty which manifested itself in the child of six weeks, has become greatly developed in one of a year old. At this age, a child who is active, and consequently improved, reads impressions on the features. You see reflected in him all the gradations of your temper; he does not know from whence these changes proceed, but he partakes them, and in remaining a stranger to the causes he associates himself with all the effects. It is not precisely that he is sorrowful because you have pain, or is joyful because you have pleasure; for he does not conceive of his existence apart from yours, He lives in you, and feels with you, without power to do otherwise. He is a mirror where your moral state is represented with an astonishing fidelity.

At a still later period in an infant of nine months old, I witnessed a fact that I will relate here as an example. The child was playing gaily upon his mother's knees, when a woman entered the chamber whose countenance was expressive of calm but deep sadness. This person

whom he knew, without having any particular affection for her, from that time fixed his attention. By degrees his countenance became discomposed, his playthings fell from his hands, and at last he threw himself weeping upon his mother's bosom. It was not fear, nor pity, neither was it compassion that affected him; he suffered, and relieved himself by tears.

Likewise, at the age of fifteen or sixteen months, a child who is present at a grave lecture, and sees a thoughtful expression on every face, is soon possessed with a certain reverence, and if you do not prolong the time sufficiently to weary him, the same effect will be produced on all similar occasions: this explains how a religious feeling, which is apparently too elevated to be experienced by infancy, may germinate early in young souls. An impression which is at first without object, but which bears some analogy to the solemn emotion a sincere worship can inspire, is communicated by sympathy to the child. He feels that he is in a holy region, the idea that it possesses something sacred is gradually admitted into his heart, and when afterwards we speak to him of God as the invisible object of our adoration, the idea of a hidden power no longer surprises him; he believes that he has felt the imposing effect of His presence.

These impressions are undoubtedly very transitory: they are modifications which are as fugitive as shadows; but the oftener they are repeated, the easier it will be to reproduce them, and in a short time we shall see certain inclinations arise from them which will be easy to cultivate. The progress of the human heart is the same thing; impressions light at first, but often reiterated become more and more decided; they soon bring into the soul a disposition which always facilitates the renewal of them, and thus prepares the way for those sentiments which influence our life.

A multitude of emotions, of passions, of divers impressions which in a certain sense may be regarded as natural, are communicated to the child by our agency; the germs of them existed in him undoubtedly, for it is necessary to the rapid growth of any impulse that there should be already in the soul a disposition to receive it; but this disposition may remain inert and dormant, and we ought always to distinguish the inclinations which infallibly manifest themselves, and without exterior impulse, from those whose expansion we may indefinitely retard. Thus vehement complaint, impatience, resistance accompanied by cries and violent gesticulations, are inevitable among children; but the desire of vengeance is not always so; they do not all wish to make others suffer, because they do. And if in struggling they strike to the right and to the left, it is without any intention of wounding, when they have never seen in another the expression of such a design: this, at least, I am induced to believe is the case with regard to some children; but it will be necessary to confirm this opinion by more precise observations.

The unreasonable fears which children often experience, are owing for the most part to the contagion of example: this has been remarked by Rousseau — a dangerous guide sometimes, but often an excellent observer: he also advises us to accustom children from the earliest age to the sight of ugly and repulsive animals. They have then but little idea of danger, and are liable to be subject to antipathies, rather than to genuine fear. These aversions are ordinarily the effect of surprise at the appearance of some striking object. They turn away, for example, at the approach of a person clothed in black, but they would voluntarily grow familiar with this one, sooner than with any other, if they lived in a family whose members all wore mourning. In Africa, the little negroes

are afraid of the whites, and it is the idea of a white devil that terrifies them.*

The pleasure of exerting influence is already very great in children of this age. If they feel sympathy, they exact it also; and it chagrins them when it is refused; likewise raillery, which is an insulting manner of refusing it, shocks and mortifies them. All disagreement between them and us, is painful to them, and they incessantly solicit returning concord. If they have once made us smile by some pretty way, they will repeat it to satiety, and think it hard if we smile no longer: when we do not yield immediately to their desires, the refusal to oblige them, afflicts them as much as the privation: often indeed a sentiment of wounded pride impels them to disdain a tardy offer; they reject with scorn the object that they would have obtained from our friendship, and then their pouting lips, averted looks, and frowning brows manifest the affront they have received.

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* It would be profitable in infancy, to accustom children to obscurity, which they are not yet afraid of: we ought only to be careful to run to them at the slightest call: it is important at the same time that the impression produced by night be not so novel as to be very strong, and that they attach to it no idea of suffering, or of loneliness, otherwise they would have met no sooner with some frightful object than the image of it would be presented to them in darkness. A child of two years old, on being asked the cause of his repugnance to remaining in a gloomy place, replied, 'I do not love chimney sweepers:' if he had been accustomed to obscurity, his imagination would not probably have conjured up this phantom. Nevertheless, in regard to this we cannot speak confidently: it may be that the complete absence of sensation during the night naturally produces on the soul a painful influence, and may be to it a state of bereavement approaching to desolation and affright. But this is not observable in infancy. At that era, when we ought never to leave children alone, the example of gaiety makes them easily endure the privation of light. [Ed.]

It is consequently to carry too far the desire of hardening little children to pain, when we refuse them the tribute of a just pity in their sufferings. It would undoubtedly be inexpedient to agitate their nerves by caresses, when we see them disposed to support with cheerfulness little misfortunes; but when they really feel sickness or pain, we ought to pity them; otherwise, we shall harden their hearts, and soon they will lightly treat the sufferings of others. When we have testified to them that we participate their sufferings, it will also become easier to raise their courage.*

From sympathy proceeds the propensity to imitation. After having felt with us, the child wishes to act as we do: this is very natural. He believes himself able to execute whatever he sees us do, and his attempts, at once graceful and awkward, are a source of great amusement to us; we make them an object of pleasantry, so that similar enterprizes which were in him the effect of a serious desire, we cause to become perverted. Natural endeavors at im-

* It is very easy to teach children to bear slight hurts with fortitude; not indeed by neglecting them on such occasions, but by diverting their attention from their own feelings; we may even teach them to laugh at slight accidents; a child of eleven months old, in its first attempts to walk had many falls, and when it met with one which caused it to weep for a moment, it would soon stop and change its wailing into a tone of laughter. Had it been pitied and mourned over, the hurt would have been much longer remembered. Indeed so fond are children of attention and devotedness, that they usually make the most of an accident, when they see this is the means of securing them. It may be the best way to treat grown people who are disposed to make their own ailments a subject of discourse, not unfeelingly to repulse them, but gradually to turn their thoughts to other subjects. In this way human beings might be of great service to each other; but alas, they are in many cases disposed rather to trifle with, or take advantage of each other's weaknesses, than to assist in conquering them! [Ed.]

itation are soon premeditated, almost affected, while he continues them for our diversion.

A lady receives a letter, and reads aloud some parts of it to those who are about her, without dreaming that she is heard by her child. He very soon seizes the first paper that he can find, holds it up before his face, and pronounces at hazard all the words which he remembers, connecting them by a noise similar to that of language. If the witnesses of this scene begin to laugh, the child does not cease his reading. A glance, cast secretly upon his mother, betrays in him a comic mixture of the gravity which he wishes to preserve as actor, and the gaiety which he partakes. Animated by success, he increases his attempts more and more, and at last he is nothing but a little buffoon, who wishes to make merriment. It did not however begin in pleasantry, and he intended to give himself to a serious occupation.

Thus our manners alter the simplicity of children, in associating the idea of the effect which they produce on us, with their first impressions; but what quickness of observation may we not suppose from one such scene, and a thousand others of the same kind which I could relate.* Where has the child acquired this knowledge of our nature, this skill in buffoonery, and this taste for admiration, which has inflated his young heart? The intelligence of sympathy with which he is endowed, is unquestionably very different from that intelligence of reason, which comes by means of words. But if one had not preceded the other, all the words which express the feelings, the affections, in short the moral ideas, would long remain without any meaning to the child.

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* All the facts which I have cited as examples have been actually witnessed. [Ed.]

It may be that the interior of the child, moulds itself by the exterior of others. He sees an action which he copies, accompanied by a certain expression of physiognomy that he copies also; and soon, at a future period, it becomes manifest within him. He becomes grave from imitation of the serious, tender from that of persons of sensibility; and once imbued with these sentiments, his soul is more and more modified by them. This phenomenon appears singular, but it is not without analogy in human life. We see men endowed with the talent of mimicry, who with the expression of countenance of those they imitate, assume their manners and turn of mind; and who often, when they attempt to speak like persons who possess more originality than themselves, have ideas come to them that they would otherwise never have originated. Dress has its influence likewise, because it invests those who wear it, with a countenance correspondent to its appropriate character. The power of the military costume is well known, and it has been proved in the English schools that one of the best means of giving habits of order, of sobriety, and a kind of dignity to unfortunate and depraved children, was to clothe them decently. The effect of the outer upon the inner man exists at every period of life, and like most of the effects of instinct, it is most marked in children; but our purely moral affections exert over them an influence still more direct. It is more powerful, more rapid, more electrical, if we may so speak; and it exists between the child and us, in secret and mysterious communications from soul to soul.

Whatever it may be, sympathy and imitation dispose of every thing in these young creatures; one, is the principle of their sentiments; the other, of their actions. Those poor children who are born blind do not walk, because they have not seen others walk. It is necessary first to raise them, then to make them stand erect, and

then to advance their feet one after the other. Take away sympathy and imitation, and what will remain to the child? Faculties and inclinations, undoubtedly. Faculties put him in a situation to imitate us, and inclinations determine his choice between objects of imitation. Children do not copy every thing they see done; they follow only the examples which correspond to their inclinations. This source of diversity, joined to the difference of circumstances, is sufficient to explain the variety of characters we find among them, notwithstanding we always see them choose only among such as are offered to their observation.

Self-love, as we have seen it, derives its source from two feelings, the pleasure that children experience in having succeeded in some enterprize, and their desire to see us participate in this pleasure. When, at ten or eleven months old, they are able to raise themselves before a chair, they cry, they gesticulate until we have remarked them; triumphant joy is painted in their eyes, and our applause renders them tender and caressing.

It is thus that these divers elements, the necessity of agreeable and varied sensations, such as acting, imitating, influencing, exciting, and feeling sympathy, bring forth in young children all the attributes of human nature. We may see the whole retinue by the time they are a year old, and if we had more penetration we should discover the traces of them much earlier.

The power of imagination is already great at this age, but I delay speaking of it, until the period when the child, being in possession of language, we shall have a surer method of appreciating its influence.

CHAPTER V.

INFLUENCE OF SYMPATHY.

"Nothing penetrates so sweetly and so deeply into the soul, as the influence of example."—LOCKE.

THE reign of sympathy in young children is the cause of the power that we exert over them. So long as they but imperfectly comprehended language, and were not at all influenced by reason, we could only govern them by force, if Heaven had not opened to us the way to their heart. Instinct, which obliges them to live in harmony with us, is the means designed by Providence to make them adopt our sentiments insensibly, and to mould their will by ours. As such an instinct endures but a little while; from the time that it is no longer indispensable, it begins to be withdrawn by the hand which seemed to have lent it as a supplement to intelligence. Soon the entire scene is changed. When once we undertake to govern the child by reason, that is to say by showing him that there is a necessity imposed upon him by the nature of things, that of thinking as we do, diminishes. He applies himself to judge by our words, more than our dispositions; he lives for himself, and not for us. We should undoubtedly endeavor to make him abandon this selfishness at some future day, but it is not yet time.

Until your child is three or four years old, he has no happiness but with you. His necessities, his pleasures, the security which he wishes to enjoy, put him in your power. Other children amuse him an instant, and soon trouble him; the little passions called into action interfere, and the impossibility of being understood by them, brings him back to you. But when once the young intelligence has taken wing, when the easy use of language permits them to propose a common design, and to agree together, your child will escape from you continually. To run, to jump, to climb, to exercise his powers with the companions of his sports, will be his true enjoyments; they are independent of you, and if you have not secured his affections in season, he may return to you from necessity, but not from the effect of a voluntary choice.

I say more, at six years the tastes, the character are almost formed; at least there already exists an impression very difficult to efface. If the child is malicious, headstrong, irritable, he will remain so until the era when a new development will have had time to operate. If he do not possess certain decided inclinations; if flowers, birds, and rural objects do not speak to his imagination, it will not be easy to make him acquire a love of nature; and a taste for the fine arts, which are but images of nature, he will remain a stranger to; if in short, social affections, religious feeling, and a certain respect for ideas of order and duty, are not manifest in his soul, — I do not assuredly pretend to say that all is lost, — but I say that the child was unhappily gifted, or that the parents have already reason to reproach themselves seriously.

It seems as if we endeavored to shut our eyes upon the importance of the first years: it is a period we speak of with levity. Because a young child cannot comprehend our conversation, because he is not susceptible of regular instruction, we conclude that he is a being of so little

consequence, that his physical nature alone is to be regarded. As his life passes in play, we look upon him as a plaything himself. Every thing in him seems insignificant, because every thing is as yet undecided; but if this indecision were annihilated, we should no longer possess power over him.

When you have permitted the favorable season of sympathy to pass away without gathering its happy fruits, such as the desire to please, to oblige, to assist the suffering,* a willingness to deprive self of pleasure in order to bestow it upon others; you soon reach an unwelcome period, when the child will comprehend your exhortations in a certain degree, without receiving any sensible impression from them. Your reasonings will then be listened to, comprehended, perhaps approved, but they will in reality produce little effect on him, because you would call upon principles that would not have acquired sufficient activity in his soul. The child will perceive, with indifference, the logical train of the ideas; he will feel that they truly follow the one from the other; but it is their connection that he will admit, and not the ideas themselves. He would be in the condition of one who hearing you add a column of figures aloud, would judge that you proceeded regularly, and who if you said three and three make five, would correct you; but without its following from that, that these numbers were representations of real value to him.

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*A child may have a desire to please, and to oblige, and to relieve distress; but in order to render these feelings active, there must be in the character a capacity of self-denial, without which, the best dispositions are but as the blighted flowers of spring, which produce no fruit. Self-denial cannot be too early taught the child; and yet we commend its fine feelings, its compassionate sympathy, without reflecting, that they cost nothing, and are indeed worth nothing, except as they impel to action, and lead one to forget himself in doing for another. [Ed.]

It is thus that a child of six or seven years old often listens to your moral discourses. He cannot contest their principles, often indeed he appears to admit them with pleasure; if he has great facility of speech, perhaps he will forthwith deduct some interesting consequence, but do not depend too much on the results of his conviction. When the heart is not already well disposed, such an exercise of the mind has but little influence upon the conduct.

The development of this fundamental perception might encourage us much, and it would be actually premature but I will however make this remark; since the child was rendered capable of experiencing affections before he could form any combination of ideas, must it not be that the Creator commenced by preparing the elements which were to compose his future morality? If we lose the opportunity of communicating good feelings to the child, by neglecting to avail ourselves of the aid of sympathy, transient as it is, we reverse an admirable order. Then, when the season for which we have waited to undertake the work is come, we have no proper lever to act with. Our principles of morality become empty forms, to which the heart responds nothing.

If the importance of the sentiments which we inspire in very young children, were not proved, still it would be necessary to suppose it; it would be at first the surest way; and afterwards, would be the means from which we should have the most to hope for the future. All imaginable resources have been employed for other ages. Reason has done what she could, and instruction likewise; punishments, rewards, the extreme excitement of self-love, all the common artillery of education has been brought into play, and often with very little advantage. The only thing that has not been attempted, at least with regularity, is to give a sort of positive education to infancy; not only to remove

from the child the example of evil, but to draw him with an imperceptible movement towards that which is good, and make him enter life in a right direction.

Nevertheless, if this route has not been *methodically* followed, yet how many times it has been by inspiration! How many happy characters, how many amiable qualities are owing to this sympathy of infancy, which mothers know so well how to call forth, of which they always make so sweet, and sometimes so judicious a use! But what greater service could be rendered to early education, than to extend and regulate, if possible, that which tenderness and good sense have often dictated to mothers?

The means of influencing young children is well known to them; it is also truly pointed out by Providence, since it first consists in loving them. It is the mother, or rather it is her love, which excites sweet emotions in the new-born soul: her looks, her caresses awaken affections which only require to be brought forth. Without these testimonies of attachment, such affections would perhaps never be formed. An unfortunate child deprived of maternal caresses, might not, until very late, admit a ray of love into his heart. He would then have tender feelings in common with others; and all the better kind possessed by children, would lie dormant until an exterior impulse called it into being. But of what consequence would it be at what time this took place? Would they less surely be animated by good inclinations? What is more infallible than the love of mothers? In that nothing is accidental, nothing depends upon circumstances, or even upon the qualities of the child. It is not only for the preservation of his frail existence that he has been confided to the strongest of all instincts, but also because he possesses a moral life; his body and his young spirit have been placed under the same safeguard, the most certain and most powerful here below:

The heart of the child then, as we have seen, is active before the intellect: the spark of feeling is the first to kindle, as also the least liable to be extinguished. 'The law of love which produces love,' says the illustrious Chalmers, 'will be continued in eternity. It is the most indelible trait of our nature; the innocent creature yet in the cradle manifests it, and we find it still existing in the most hardened criminal. If an unhappy wretch, who appears dead to all morality, sees himself the object of a sincere good will, a dawning of emotion is excited in his withered heart, and he seems animated by a new principle.'

It is so truly love which produces love in the child, that he possesses an extraordinary tact for discovering it. His preferences, which appear unaccountable, are founded on an inconceivable divination in regard to this point. Ugliness and the infirmities of age do not repulse him, the most essential services affect him but little; it is love that he wants, love without beauty, without external grace, without even a title to gratitude: but when he finds its expression, the acts of kindness which prove it redouble his attachment. On the other hand, his aversion for cold and severe countenances is insurmountable.

It is the more necessary to avoid exciting this last impression, inasmuch as nothing can result from it but evil. Persons whom the child does not love, exert over him only an unhappy influence: he imitates their bad examples, and not their good. Fear, impatience, anger, are transmitted from such, and hatred even facilitates the communication of them. But in order to possess the gentle affections, it is necessary to love: tenderness is the warmth which is essential for the development of goodly fruits. It is the first nourishment, and like milk to the young life, which can grow and strengthen only by means of such an aliment.

It is not enough, then, that children be benevolent,—they must love: benevolence opens the heart, but love alone warms and fills it. It is more nearly allied to greatness of soul than sympathy: the latter may exist, and sometimes exerts too great an empire among feeble minds; but a certain moral vigor can alone render us capable of attachment. Therefore I would not advise to turn aside the first affections of children without important reasons. A change of nurses or attendants is a crisis we ought to spare them, if we can. If they have naturally great sensibility, there is some danger in putting it to such a proof: we have seen poor children who were separated from those they loved most, imbibe a deep melancholy, and die; if on the contrary their affections are cold and fickle, they will become more so from change: they will not be fixed on any thing, and the child will soon manifest selfishness, a vice very odious in itself, and which corrupts the first principles of education.

The jealousy of mothers induces them sometimes to remove inferior rivals, who seem to be usurping their place in the hearts of the children; but in so doing, they do not understand their own interest. The affections may be transplanted more easily than augmented. The sentiment already formed may change its object, but the difficulty is, that it might require more power to turn away the child from being occupied solely with himself. When once he prefers himself to all others, there is no longer hope of change; and the love of self is the most faithful of all attachments.

At the age of five or six years, children almost always adhere from choice to their mother. Queen of the mansion, the distributor of great favors, the only one in a situation to appreciate and reward merit; for be her talents and agreeable acquirements ever so small, she procures pleasures and employs a power, the effect of which on

young imaginations nothing can counterbalance. She ought then to be tranquil about the future, and not forcibly break old ties, that from their very nature will become weakened.

It would be better however if the heart first declared itself for the mother. Infidelity, which brings him back to her, has nothing interesting in itself, and sometimes it is very tardy in its operations. It results also from an ill-concealed rivalry; from vanity in the child, who sees his affections contented for; and sometimes from a shade of hypocrisy. 'You pretend to prefer me,' said a mother to her daughter, 'why then, when you are ill do you desire that your attendant should take care of you rather than me?' 'Because,' replied the child, 'when I am sick, I forget that I ought to love you best.'

Moreover, we can acquire a knowledge of infancy, only so far as we know how to inspire it with attachment. In vain do we cherish our children, when we feel that they do not love us; we want that confidence, that self-abandonment which makes us accessible to them; our air of inspection, of supervision, repels them; they are constrained in our presence, and the great influence of sympathy is exerted by others, rather than ourselves.

But what advice can be given relative to this period of life, which ought not to be accompanied by restrictions, and what prudence is not necessary in the management of so much weakness! If sympathy is too frequently called into action, it renders children inconstant, susceptible in the extreme to all sorts of impressions. Thus a powerful sentiment excites a tumult in their hearts; it often agitates them; it moves them to a degree of which we little thought; and considering the uncertainty of human things, it may, as I have said, expose them to much sorrow. Violent and impassioned caresses are also bad. Miss Edgeworth advises mothers to prohibit them, and

physicians condemn them for other reasons. They are also a source of future injustice, since at first they are lavished merely as a boon, and are afterwards refused to the real merit of the child. They may be also attended by disastrous consequences, as they produce a thirst for love, which, not being allayed in the second stage of infancy, mingles sometimes with the impressions of another age, and may augment its danger.

Let your caresses then be to encourage and to fortify, if I may so speak; let them possess gaiety without extravagance, and above all banish from them a languishing effeminacy. In proportion as you make them tokens of approbation, you may give them a useful character.

This sweet exchange of sentiments is the only means also of developing the intelligence of the child. Every other language, except that of kindness, stupifies him, and lessens him in his own eyes. Thus, I think it very wrong to make frequent use of a harsh and threatening accent, to turn little children from certain mischievous acts: you make them suspend the action, I admit, but it is because you disturb their feelings. You interrupt the train of their ideas. They do nothing but weep, and when they are appeased, they have forgotten the thing that occupied them; but they do not imagine that you have forbidden it, and they recommence it on the first occasion. When they give a meaning to our words, it is from sympathy: the accent and the countenance explain it, and hence the extreme inequality in their facility of comprehending us. If, then, you cut short this disposition by violence, they will understand you no longer. It is true, that by dint of associating an impression of fear with the idea of a certain act, they may at length abstain from it; it is thus animals are trained. But if you adopt this kind of education with the child, he will soon receive from it another. Witness of your anger, he will at once take

example from you, and the injurious words with which you load him, will before long be applied to yourself. The instinct of imitation is stronger in children than fear; and, unless we suppose an excess of severity, happily become very rare, we are models to them, more than objects of fear.

We find in animals, precisely the reverse. The fear of each other acts upon the different species, while the love of imitation is confined to those of the same species. If you maltreat a dog, and he menaces you, he does it but to defend himself, and not to imitate you. We do not see, monkeys excepted, any living creature out of our species, mimic our actions. In infancy, all copy the example of father and mother, and particularly human creatures. Never be angry, then, either with your child, or in his presence. Until three or four years old, the most virtuous indignation will be but anger in his eyes. You would take his cause in hand, but soon the motive would escape him, and the effect which struck his senses, would alone act upon his sensitive imagination. When we think of the immense advantage which men of self-possession have over others in the world, we ought to seek to procure this superiority for children.

In subjection, as he is by this condition, the young being nevertheless feels mentally free, and he possesses a feeling of independence: at his age he understands nothing of servility, of entreaty, of condescension, or even of the effect of fear. The child of eighteen months acts as he pleases; his weakness, and our power he does not think of. His solicitations, which are never humble, become orders but too easily. When he seeks to oblige you, it is because he loves you, because he delights to please you. If your threats succeed in frightening him for a moment, recovered from his astonishment, he is

not the more docile for them; and your anger, by bewildering his mind, increases his disposition to irritability.*

Thus if we knew how to distinguish the results of our conduct, we should see them increase with time, and always find them more extensive than we imagined. The various stimulants to the moral development which I have spoken of, sympathy, love, instinct of imitation, expectation of pleasures and pains, are so many threads which may be woven by ourselves. The nature of the infant is manifested by his avidity to receive sensations, by the power which he soon manifests of employing them, of transforming in a thousand ways the materials that we, sooner or later, furnish to his mind. We influence chil-

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* We sometimes see parents correcting very young children to make them cease crying. The following fact, it is feared, is not the only one of the kind which might be adduced. A gentleman was playing with his child of a year old, who, as he thought unreasonably, began to cry. He ordered silence; the child did not obey; the father then began to whip it, but this terrified the child, and increased its cries. The mother interceded but in vain. The father thought the child would be ruined unless it was made to yield, and renewed his chastisement with increased severity. The child shrieked with still more violence—the mother in tears turned from the sight of what she knew to be injudicious, and felt to be cruel; but she knew her husband thought himself in the right, and would be inflexible to her entreaties; yet she often returned, as a momentary quiet made her hope the scene was at an end; but the child was quiet only from exhaustion, and renewed its cries as soon as it regained strength. At length it sunk into sleep, incapable of further effort, and was delivered into the arms of the mother. On undressing it, a pin was discovered sticking into its back, and thus the cause of its first cries was ascertained. Both parents now watched in intense agony over the sufferer, who in its disturbed sleep gave strong indications of a tendency to convulsions; every nerve seemed agitated, and convulsive sobs at intervals showed that even in sleep, the mind was torn by terrifying fears. The father wisely resolved never again to correct a young child to make it quiet. [Ed.]

dren unintentionally by the effect of the most necessary cares; the question is not, whether we modify the soul of the child,—but whether we do it understandingly.

To leave nature to act, in the most reasonable sense of this expression, is to give the faculties an opportunity to re-establish their equilibrium, when this has been destroyed by misfortune. Then the free choice of the child ordinarily inclines him to fix upon the state which is most salutary to him; it exercises the faculties that have remained inactive, and gives repose to those which we have too much exercised, thus in a degree repairing our faults. It is generally a prudent measure in education to make alternate use of opposite situations. When calm and activity, silence and noise, solitude and society succeed each other at regular intervals, all is not disturbance and confusion in the new-born infant; each influence acting in its turn, produces the good that is appropriate to it, and we succeed in distinguishing its effect; from this we infer, that the little child should sometimes be left to himself, and be permitted to manifest his own inclinations.

Therefore mechanical means of safety, such as secure him against accidents, have at least the advantage of procuring some independence to the child. But on the contrary, those which, like leading-strings, oblige us to follow them constantly; which either subject him to our caprices, or us to cares; those, I say, combine a bad moral effect with physical inconvenience.

But whatever hope we may found upon a tendency to equilibrium in infancy, it would be very imprudent to depend upon the energy of such a principle. Even were it active enough to prevent the formation of bad inclinations, it would never be sufficient to destroy them, when once contracted. On the contrary, there is in every inclination a preservative instinct, which incessantly nourishes and strengthens it. So that if the inclination is danger-

ous, what we call its nature, or the probable course of its development is far from being favorable to future morality. It is therefore true that the first propensity of the character deserves our most serious attention, and that a talent for observation,* is an inestimable gift to a mother.

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* This talent *must* be cultivated by the mother who wishes either the physical or moral well-being of her child. She *must observe* the daily condition of its bowels, the effect which food of different kinds has upon its stomach, or the effect of medicines, (if such are necessary)—she must *observe* what are the most favorable hours for its sleep, and what degree of exercise and exposure it will bear—especially must she *observe* what renders it fretful, and what has a calming effect upon its spirits, and what is the best method of managing its disposition: in short, much of a mother's duty is comprised in this one word, *observation*. Indeed, *action* is connected with it; but few mothers fail in this—most of them *do* enough for their children; but the difficulty is, their actions are too seldom the result of *observation*. *Some method* is better than none, even though it be a bad one. There is always hope that a person who seeks to do right, will get into the right way: while of those who make no effort, we can have no hope. [Ed.]

CHAPTER VI.

THE MEANS BY WHICH CHILDREN ACQUIRE LANGUAGE.

'De ma faible raison je fis l'apprentissage;
Trappé du son des mots, attentif aux objets,
Je répétai les noms, Je distinguai les traits,
Je connus, je nommai, je caressai mon père.'

RACINE THE YOUNGR.

THE end of the second year is remarkable among children for the rapid progress that they usually make in speech. At this time they begin to express themselves well, or ill; — but we may observe a great difference in this respect; the unequal distribution of nature's gifts are already manifest. The art of speaking, requires the concurrence of many faculties, moral and physical; and if any one of these remains undeveloped, it becomes an obstacle in the way of improvement.

Indeed, to appreciate sounds, an ear is necessary, and to articulate them with flexibility in the organs of the throat, understanding. Mind is necessary to comprehend words, and memory to retain them. When such gifts are found united in an eminent degree, which is very rarely the case, the child will speak very well at two years old.

But how has the child, who is so inferior to animals of the same age in many respects, come in possession of

this excellent gift of speech? By what means has he obtained it? This I could have wished to elucidate by minute observations, whereas I can only give a feeble outline. The subject is far from being treated here, but I shall at least have recommended it to the attention of mothers. Nothing can be more interesting, than to see the understanding gradually emerge from the cloud that enveloped it, soaring aloft each time that it discovers a new expression, and making its first acquirements the means of obtaining those of greater consequence. The child, a stranger in the world of things which he yet scarcely knows, soon feels the necessity of entering the world of words, which correspond to them, and which will soon furnish avenues to thought. At that time he commences a more intellectual existence, where images of things, and the tumultuous desires which they excite, always reign, but which he soon becomes able to tranquillize.

Aided by the intelligence of some mothers, I have collected the following facts:—

Words, separated by the young mind, from the sentence to which they properly belong, occupy a place by themselves, in his memory. Of this number are, first, nouns, or the signs attached to persons or things, which attract the attention of children. They voluntarily repeat the most striking syllable of these, that which has given the idea of forming double syllables, of the first words we teach them. These are nothing but the articulations which constituted the natural warbling of the child, before he began to speak. Thus, at the age of seven or eight months, he constantly pronounces the syllables pa, ma, da, but without attaching any meaning to them. When he comes to associate them afterwards with the idea of certain objects, and thus to make a language of them, it is because we have given him the example, but perhaps without being conscious of its effect.

It undoubtedly appears simple enough, that the child learns to name material objects: when we have often shown them to him, at the same time giving utterance to certain sounds, the thing afterwards awakens the idea of the word, and the word that of the thing. But it is more difficult to conceive how he attaches a sign to that which has no corporeal existence. Actions, for example, which are always expressed or supposed by verbs, have no permanent type in nature; they do not come within the scope of the child's senses when he names them, and he says 'go,' at a time when one did not go. It must be that he has the idea expressed by the verb, that this idea is at once clear and flexible, and applies itself successively to every circumstance of the action. Now, how has he conceived a notion which seems to be an abstraction of the most subtle kind? It appears that it has been given to him by gestures; actions are the natural subjects of pantomime, which we also call the language of action. We gesticulate a great deal with children, without thinking of it; they are also great gesticulators themselves. If then a particular word has always accompanied a particular movement, the two ideas become connected in their brain.

It is true there are several words which are verbs to us, but not always so to them. Thus, 'to drink' is to them the idea of water, or milk: 'to walk' is either the open air, or the door. But when they begin to expect that we shall act in consequence of these words, the action acquires more and more consistency in their minds, and they at length truly attach a sign to it.

It is worthy of remark that even animals comprehend verbs, whenever they express an action. We ordinarily make use of these words to dogs and horses, when we wish them to obey us, and then we naturally employ them in the imperative. The child as well as the negro, makes use at first of the infinitive alone. As he forms no idea

of time, and as he does not comprehend pronouns until a late period, he is reduced to this mode of speech.

Two words, which the child learns very readily, the particles 'yes,' and 'no,' are also intepretations of gestures. They designate the corporeal act of repulsing or receiving, and thence become verbs; these are 'will,' and 'wont.' 'No,' above all, is frequently employed by the child; it expresses in one word his repugnance; but when the thing offered to him is agreeable, he seizes it with such eager vivacity, that the word becomes useless.

Some of the adjectives are next introduced into his brain, and they are those which express sensations very strikingly. 'Pretty,' is soon of this number, so great is his desire to testify his admiration.

He at first makes use of various words without connecting them together; but we can easily see that they are assembled in his mind. Thus a child who sees his father and mother near the fire, immediately says 'Papa, Mama, warm,' leaving out the intermediate words. At this early period of development, children are continually giving utterance to indifferent observations without any other motive than the pleasure of expressing them.

In reflecting on this subject, we perceive that these three kinds of words, nouns, verbs, and adjectives, pronounced by infancy before any other, are truly the material, and, as it were, the body of conversation. They express the great concern of the soul as it regards this world, that of distinguishing external objects by nouns, that of defining its own impressions by adjectives, and lastly of announcing its determinations by verbs. This is to know, to feel, and to will. It is the whole man.

These words then are of great importance to the child; but how happens it that he finally employs others to which it seems difficult that he should attach a meaning? How does he comprehend prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs,

those terms without number, which, as it were, are instruments with which we vary, separate, connect, or modify in a thousand ways, the component parts of conversation? What use has he for '*with*' '*as*' '*for*' '*although*' '*very*' —of which perhaps not one grown person in ten knows how to define. He employs them very properly as soon as he has acquired them; but it is this acquirement which appears so mysterious.

Some observations induce me to believe, that he does not separate them from the sentence of which they form a part. This sentence appears to him to be one great word, the meaning of which he divines by the power of his wonderful sympathy; a word which he repeats distinctly if he has a correct ear and a flexible throat; if otherwise, he maims, or abridges it, but never decomposes it. And when he afterwards finds the same terms in different sentences, he does not immediately remember them. These words are to him, what syllables are to us, when we constantly meet them in conversation, without attaching any sense to them. Nothing perhaps but reading can give us a knowledge of the true formation of words. Therefore, we see unlettered people, who write without having read much, connect terms together in the most singular manner, and unite, or divide them, at hazard.

Let us suppose that we say to the child, holding out our hand at the same time, 'Will you come to the garden with me?' he will repeat—'Yes, yes, come to the garden with me;' the gesture, and the word 'garden,' having been sufficient to make him understand. If, on the contrary, we said to him, making a repulsive sign—'I will go into the garden without you!' he will repeat for a long time in a mournful voice, 'Not without you, not without you.' Hence we see, that although understanding correctly the entire sentence, he does not give a meaning to every word.

What gives most perplexity to the head of the poor child, are pronouns. 'Me,' and 'I,' especially remain a long time behind a cloud. As these words are alone applicable to him who pronounces them, we do not employ them when we speak to the child of himself; without ever being the object of them, he sees them changing their object continually; hence he has no idea of bringing them into use. When he wishes to designate his own person, he considers himself, if I may use the expression, out of the body, and speaks of himself as another, using his own name. 'Give to Albert, lead Albert,'* these are the expressions he employs. I have heard a child who was always spoken to in the second person, always use the second person in mentioning himself. The introduction of 'I' would be curious to observe.

On the other hand, such vestiges of the animal language as we have preserved in our idioms, the cries which we have adopted into the human language under the name of interjections, the child seizes upon and applies with wonderful quickness. The 'oh!' of unpleasant surprise; is never confounded by him with the 'ah!' of pleasure, nor

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* In a letter from a friend now before me, she thus speaks of the attempts of her little son, two years old, in the use of language:—He is fond of the garden, and says, 'Baby go weed gargy;' by night he is very tired with his day's work, and says, 'Ma' get chair, take baby, rock, shing.'—'Thus I find,' continues our observing correspondent, 'that nouns and verbs pronounced after his own fashion, constitute his vocabulary, with the exception of an occasional adjective, such as *pretty puss, good Ma!*' Many children in their first attempts to speak, call themselves 'baby,' speaking of themselves, as the author remarks, in the third person;—one little girl, whose mother used caressingly to call her *darling*, *took the word*, and modulating it to suit her own imperfect articulation, appropriated the cognomen of *doggy*, much to the wonder and amusement of strangers, who would as vainly have sought for the origin, as we of many of the terms in our language. [Ed.]

with the reverential 'oh!' of prayer. Much time would pass away before we could philosophically explain all these; but the young bird learns by intuition, the song of his mother.

A question arose among several metaphysicians at the close of the last century. They asked how it was possible that the child learns the use of generic names. That he attaches a sign to a definite object, could be conceived, but how comes he to apply it to a whole class of beings? How is it that he gives the name of dog, to all the species, however little resemblance they may bear to the first he has heard thus called? Does he form general ideas?* Does he know that the names of species, are applied to all individuals combining certain qualities, and does he abstractly consider these qualities, separating them from the subject that possesses them? This would be a great effort for a young mind.

Nevertheless, such, by profound thinkers, is believed

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* The lady whose remarks upon her child's language, we have quoted in another note, says,—'My little boy was much delighted a few days since with the sight of a chicken, the name of which we pronounced as we showed him the object. In his imperfect way, he imitated the word; and when, the next day, he was carried into the poultry yard, where were many chickens, he at once called out *tickee*, *tickee*, having gone through with the mental process of generalizing, as well as he could have done under the tuition of Locke, or any other philosopher. Indeed, after all that is said about this wonderful process, it seems to me the simplest thing in the world. The child saw *one* chicken, and *learned its name*; when he saw other animals like it, his mind instantly perceived the *resemblance*, and he called them all chickens. And yet a process which is so evidently suggested by nature in this simple and intelligible manner, is, as I am informed by those better versed in speculative philosophy than myself, made an occasion for great disputation.' We think our friend's practical philosophy worth volumes of speculation. [Ed.]

to be the fact; but when metaphysicians have deigned to occupy themselves with young children, they have, in my opinion, attributed more of reason and less of intuition to them, than they possess. The following is the opinion of Locke on this subject, as it is cited with approbation by Condillac.

'The ideas,' says he, 'that children form of the persons with whom they associate, are resemblances of the persons themselves, and are only particular ideas. The ideas which they form of their nurse and their mother, are distinctly traced in their minds; and, as so many faithful portraits, represent only these individuals. The names that they give to them designate these individuals. Thus, the names of "nurse" and "mama," which children make use of, refer only to these persons. When, afterwards, time and a greater knowledge of the world, has led them to observe that there are many other beings, who by certain common relations of face and other qualities, resemble their father, mother, and divers individuals whom they are accustomed to see, they form an idea in which they find all these beings equally participate, and they give to it, as others do, the name of man. Thus they come in possession of a generic name, and a general idea. In which they form nothing new, but separating only from the complex idea of Peter, James, Mary, and Elizabeth, that which was peculiar to each one of them, they retain only what is common to all.'

I do not deny, assuredly, that this reasoning is very logical, and I have nothing even to object to the early steps of it: the child begins by giving a name to a particular object, I acknowledge; but the manner by which he passes from that to the general idea, appears to me, not to have been indicated to Locke by observation. To proceed by separation, by retrenchment, that is to say by abstraction, seems to me little conformed to the mind of the child.

When he begins to express himself with more facility, we shall see by the great number and singularity of his associations, that he is nearer being a poet, than an analyst. The example chosen by Locke, is moreover one of the least fitted to enlighten the subject, since it is precisely in the case cited that a child would have the most trouble to generalize his ideas. The individuals he lives with, occupy so large a place in his mind; he sees them so distinctly separated from others, that he cannot consent to range them under the same denomination. A child of two years old, would be astonished, he would laugh in derision, if any body should tell him that his father is 'a man.' What would he do, then, if we pretended, with Locke, that his mother is one also? A man, is to him an unknown person — a passer-by of the lower class. He perceives undoubtedly that these unknown persons have certain relations between them; but the particular idea of which Locke speaks, is too strong in him, and cannot stretch itself to generalization.

At this age, however, and even still earlier, children are in the frequent use of general terms; but the more vague the idea of the object first named to them, the easier it becomes to extend it to other objects. Thus the dogs and horses, which they see at a distance, and therefore indistinctly, easily form to them a species. So also when they take in, at a single glance, several similar objects, the particular idea of one among them not being so clearly traced in their mind, they easily transfer it to others like it, or only slightly different. Thus I have seen a child who gave the name of apricots to all fruits — plums, cherries, gooseberries, grapes, &c; — another who called by the same name two little girls dressed alike. In the first instance there is a simple awakening of ideas — it is sensation rather than judgment. In the other there is a striking point of resemblance. We might suppose that the

child is deceived, and that he thinks he sees an object already known; but it is more correct to say that he thinks nothing—he does not decide whether the object is different, or the same; but the act of recognition is produced.* This movement, prompt, unreflecting, almost mechanical, which combines the identity of the image we preserve, with that of the object which we see, is here the effect of a simple analogy; and is rather accidental, than the operation of the mind. But when this operation commences; when the examination is truly going on, differences are appreciated, and each one of the various objects, calls for its own sign.

The first naturalists, it is well known, proceeded in the same way. They at first formed confused masses drawn from vaguely conceived relations, or what we call a family likeness. Thus they classed together under the names of monkeys, and parrots, animals that have since been distributed into different groups. In proportion as we have more minutely observed, divisions and subdivisions have been multiplied.

We ought not to confound, with the true act of generalization, the effect which the poverty of language naturally produces among uncivilized people. When there are but few words in an idiom, no word remains limited to its original meaning, and the name of a known object is given

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* When this was written, I was not acquainted with the work of M. Maine Biran, entitled '*Influence de l' habitude sur la faculté de penser.*' The author, who analyzes with great sagacity, many psycological phenomena, expresses in scientific language, the same ideas which I have advanced. According to him, a striking quality in an object, may become a *signe d' habitude*, which mechanically draws together the apparition of certain qualities, or associated impressions. It is, says he in a note, on this first effect of the *signes d' habitude*, that is founded the prompt and natural conversion of individual names into general and appellative terms. [Ed.]

all, slightly resembling it, which present themselves. Thus, an inhabitant of one of the Pelew Isles, the Prince Lee Boo, being arrived at Macao, and seeing there, for the first time, a horse, — immediately pronounced the name of dog, an animal he was already acquainted with. If the confused perceptions of the child, or the ignorance of the savage led us to consider them as more inclined to generalize ideas, than adults, or men of cultivated minds, we should thereby contradict the whole history of the human mind. Who does not know that the imagination is quick, and the mind but little capable of abstraction in the infancy of individuals, and of savage nations!

This applies also to what has been said by another metaphysician, Thomas Reid, (Essay on the Intellectual Powers of Man, page 110, chapter V.) 'If it is asked at what age men begin to form general conceptions, I reply: As soon as a child can say, understandingly, that he has two brothers or two sisters. From the moment that he employs the plural, he must necessarily have general ideas; for no single individual possesses the nature, or admits the use of the plural.'

Undoubtedly an individual, singly considered, cannot admit the use of the plural; but when the child sees two objects at once, the impression he receives is not the same, as when he perceives but one. To see two eyes in a face, or many soldiers in a battalion is not to possess general ideas; it is a recognition of the likeness of the objects which we take in at a single glance. Now, as the effect produced on the child by this compounded perception is new to him, he has read of a new way of designating it, and he then makes use of the plural.*

* These are the '*idées, concretès*,' of Charles Bonnet, those which represent collective names — flock, city, people, names which always

That the names of species, that terms which express the plural, are at length used by the child in the acquirement of true general ideas is perfectly correct. Language gradually gains a character in the mind; it becomes in turn an object, and the attention which is required for its expression, ascends by the same process to abstraction, properly so called.

The difference between children and ourselves, in this respect, seems to me to proceed from the great difference between our moral existence and theirs. Their life is constituted of images, impressions, and desires; words occupy but a very small place — the child makes use of them, but without reflecting on them. He sees things always in the same light, and consequently he possesses only particular ideas of them. Children have a wonderful faculty of association. Things link together, and reciprocally attract each other in their brain — one image awakens another, and language follows in their train. When this language passes from one object to another, it is by the influence of a relation less appreciated than felt, and the child perceives distinctly neither analogy, or difference between them.

With those who reflect, it is otherwise: general terms, such as that of species, designate a trait of resemblance perfectly defined. They collect, as in a bundle, the remembrance of a multitude of individual names, and become a means by which the mind can easily manage a great mass of ideas. These terms become also a power-

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answer to the sensation produced by similar objects seen at once. This writer says that they, as well as simple ideas, are pure results of the action of objects upon the senses, and (like every thing which appertains to the primitive laws of our being,) absolutely independent of all operations of the mind. *Essai Analytique sur les Facultés de l'âme.* [Ed.]

ful aid to knowledge, an aid which has opened to man the way to the sciences, and has subjected to him the physical and moral world. But the more consequence we give to words in the exercise of thought, the more imagination retires, and its visions fade. The brilliant period of our existence is that when imagination and feeling, equally ardent and abounding, reciprocally act upon each other in harmonious beauty. When it is no longer thus, when the pictures of imagination are effaced, and the feelings which they excited grow cold; then words reign alone, vain images of extinguished thoughts, deceitful representations which soon cease to produce even illusion. Such would be the infallible act of age, if we did not preserve in the soul a focus of life and warmth.

The physical faculties, all as remarkable in their kind as the moral, contribute to facilitate the child in the apprenticeship of language. This fact places in the strongest light the beautiful experiments upon the deaf and dumb, published by M. Itard, an excellent observer, as well as a skilful physician.* After having given the detail of his experiments, this ingenuous man draws the following conclusion — 'Thus, says he, we have an undeniable proof of that superiority of vocal imitation, which the child in infancy has over the adolescent — a superiority founded on two differences well ascertained and established by my own experience — from which it results, 1st, that the child imitates of his own accord, while it is necessary to excite the adolescent to imitation: 2d, that the child in order to speak, has only to hear; while, to perform the same function, the adolescent has need to listen and to look.'

We see afterwards, (page 502,) that M. Itard experienced some difficulty when he wished to have sounds emitted

* Traité des maladies de l' oreille et de l'audition t. 2. p. 281.

and prolonged by the deaf and dumb, who had already, (thanks to him,) the ear tolerably formed, but who knew not how to govern their lungs and throat. It is necessary to read these curious details in the book itself, in order to comprehend what would be the art of speaking, if it was necessary to study it methodically without having had nature for our master in infancy.

But with what pleasure, what astonishing rapidity, does the child advance in this study when once he has taken the first steps! Every day he makes use of new terms, he attempts longer phrases. The amusement that he finds in speaking is inexhaustible. When he sees a thing that interests him, he repeats twenty times that he has seen it, with a satisfaction of which we can have no idea. He relates to himself what pleases him,—the power of thus prolonging the impression enchants him, and pride mingled with joy, beams in his eyes.

If the difficulty of articulating sounds stops him, he labors hard, perhaps reddens, till he has given utterance to the word. At first it costs him but little trouble, but by degrees it becomes more difficult; the accentuated syllable which, in the beginning, had alone excited his attention, is successively accompanied by all the others. He corrects himself, and does not find that amusement in mangling words,* of which children become but too sensible afterwards: the satisfaction of speaking like grown people is sufficient.

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* On this point, we cannot but make a passing remark. The lisping and broken articulation of infancy is pleasant to us, and we are too apt to let children see that it is so; nay, we often speak to them ourselves in broken and inaccurate language;—but when we reflect upon the importance of their early acquiring their vernacular tongue in its purity, we shall surely be careful how we confirm them in habits, which it will be difficult, if not impossible, wholly to change in more mature years. [Ed.]

The child is so much oftener excited by pleasure, than by want, that he makes much longer speeches when happy than when grieved. He becomes eloquent when animated by gaiety or hope, but when affected by the contrary, he does nothing but murmur; and his talents vanish, with his enjoyment.

It seems, then, that this may be a particular dispensation of Providence, in order that the child might learn to speak; therefore, the gifts which he has received, transient as they are remarkable, have already lost their first virtue when his mind is more developed. Children of five or six years learn but few words. We see when they begin to read, that they do not comprehend a multitude of terms which are frequently used before them in conversation. We could tell at once that they have acquired their little treasure of words; they repose themselves, and seek no longer. They know how to give names to the portion of the universe which interests them, and what exists beyond they do not care for. A sort of instinct induces them often to repel the new acquisitions which would interfere either with their joy or their peace. They are content—why should they ask more? Their happiness is as secure as if in the bosom of an enchanted island; and the waves of the external world rage unperceived around them.

Facility of expression, which is very unequal in children, is not generally proportioned to the measure of their intelligence. An agreeable and rapid elocution frequently proves nothing but the talent of retaining set phrases; whilst a manner of speaking more laborious and less regular, denotes mental exertion and care to make expression correspond with thought.* In the last case there is not

* Teachers are often deceived in the capacities of their pupils by this difference; and should therefore be very careful how they decide that one has talents because he is flippant, and another is dull, because he finds it difficult to speak with fluency. [Ed.]

less to hope for the future; — not but the memory of words is in itself a valuable faculty; but because it often exempts from the combination of ideas, those who have no taste for this particular exercise of the mind.

In the same way that a single sign may be used by children to designate several objects, a single object is often represented in their minds by different signs. Thus they learn divers languages with extreme facility. Sounds are connected in their memory like images; and a word leading in its train all the words by which it has been accompanied, dialects are not jumbled together in their little discourses. Above all, there is no risk of confusion, when the same person always addresses the child in the same language. The idea of this person then connecting itself in his memory with that of a certain manner of speaking, he employs this manner in reply.

This is unquestionably an easy means of facilitating to the child an important acquisition; but I do not believe that there results from it any great development of intelligence; at least it would not be at all comparable to that which may be obtained from the regular study of a language. It is doubtful whether the purely practical knowledge of a dialect contributes much to form the mind. Thus we do not see that the inhabitants of frontier countries, who always know two languages at once, have more ingenious minds than other men. And among the people of the north, where children learn from the cradle to express themselves in several dialects, transcendent geniuses do not seem to be more abundant than elsewhere, although there is generally a facility of comprehension which is very remarkable. We should find there facts, which it would be very interesting to observe in relation to this subject. The union of thought and language is so intimate, that the effects of their first association would not be indifferent. The influence of a polyglot education would consequently be useful to study.

But the habit of speaking the mother tongue correctly, will always be the most essential for children. A fault, which although not considered serious, is nevertheless difficult to repair in education, is that of neglecting to employ, in relation to this, the gifts so peculiar to infancy. The ancients had not this error to reproach themselves with; and the care that they bestowed upon enunciation from the cradle actually appears trifling and pedantic. But, in countries above all where pronunciation is vicious, and the expressions often so, the like care would be a happy corrective to the evil effect of example. The point in question is not only what is agreeable, but that which possesses the most powerful means of influencing the imagination it cannot be considered frivolous to know. Language is the expression of the soul, and what empire over the happiness and morality of others, do we not exert by means of it!

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE HABITS AT TWO YEARS OLD.

"Children forget injunctions and rules of conduct; it is necesary, therefore, to make them perform indispensable duties, until they form habits independent of Memory."—LOCKE.

IT is necessary to take advantage of the character of infancy, while it is in its purity. In a short time every thing is adulterated, every thing is changed; we can no longer distinguish what is natural, from what is acquired; the voluntary from the constrained movement. Children soon feel a kind of shame at their singularities: they conceal or repress the impressions which they have no hope of seeing participated; and they look in our faces in order to discover what they ought to feel. The principal traits of infancy, however, are not so soon effaced as we think, and the traces of them remain unperceived. One may live a long time with a little savage who is in a degree outwardly civilized; but in order to know him well, it is necessary to observe him before he has made any advances in civilization.

This study is less easy than it appears to be: before the child knows how to speak, every thing seems confused in his existence. His sense of perception, that by which he connects and compares ideas, differs from ours in the highest degree; but whatever may be its nature, we know it not; and it presents in the child, as well as in animals, a problem at once interesting, and impossible to resolve. When afterwards we converse freely with him, and he might serve to enlighten us himself, that which distinguishes him from us is no longer so striking; and the child, in appearance at least, already too much resembles man. There is then a short interval more instructive than all others to the observer,—that, in which genuine infancy exists, and unveils itself; it is the age between two and four years. At that time the child is not yet upon his guard, and his natural instincts, still in their original vigor, seem to be even powerfully developed; actions the most numerous and diversified serve to interpret them. Our social state is as yet but little comprehended by the child, and he might inhabit another world as well as ours. To see how he insensibly adopts our ideas; how his will, violent and impatient, gradually submits to the yoke of example and of reason; how his young faculties, joined to the dawning light of conscience, contribute, each one following its natural course, to lay in him the foundation of morality,—is a curious examination, fitted to reveal to us an admirable dispensation of Providence, a design that we have only to conceive of in order to respect it.

Following the order of time, we shall first consider the period when the soul has as yet no control over itself; when the will, although apparently active, is truly passive; since, yielding to the strongest inclination, it renders obedience only to a blind impulse. In this state we govern children through the medium of their habits, the natural effects of our care and regularity. This means, which

is gentle, although a little mechanical, ought unquestionably not to be alone employed; but how shall we avoid making use of it? Habits are the necessary result of education, for we cannot prevent them from becoming formed, except by an unequal and capricious conduct — the example of which would be infallibly imitated.

A remark, which may seem a little paradoxical, is, that the younger the child, the more his habits appertain to his moral nature, to his soul. As he does not yet act by his own power, he can only be accustomed to anticipate. He waits for a certain succession of events, and his habits partake only of fears and hopes: it is, consequently, over the desires, the tastes, and the temper that their influence is exerted; and we do not see the little beings performing a routine of actions void of thought, so as to give the idea of mechanism. It is but a little later, when activity displays itself, and the pleasure attached to certain actions begins to operate, that the soul can in any degree remain uninfluenced by the movements which had at first governed it. Habits, then, have not, in earliest infancy, the inconvenience which appears most inevitably attached to them, that of benumbing the faculties; and the extreme pliability of children remains with them long enough to enable us to mould them to circumstances.

There is, then, in the education of infancy, judiciously conducted, an advantage, secondary it is true, but almost impossible to supply, that of accustoming the child to fulfil his duties, without thinking of that multitude of actions which merit not to be thought of, and which, however, have their utility. In giving him habits of care to perform certain obligations, in some degree essential, — such as those imposed by our physical nature, and the tacit agreement of society, is in effect to relieve the soul from this care for the future. The more we take advantage of the instinct of imitation in relation to this, the more we

shall spare ourselves the chagrin of having to prescribe as duties, things which are not so, and which, notwithstanding, are almost indispensable. This is to render to the pupil an invaluable service. What embarrassment! what awkwardness! what loss of time and thought, are suffered even among men, by doubts with regard to the propriety of the smallest acts!

This same faculty of association which facilitates to the child the acquirement of language, gives birth to habits. When the course of his life is very regular, his desires succeed each other in an almost settled order, awakening in him the image of certain objects, which have become necessary to his enjoyment. No image is solitary in his mind — the frame-work, the appendages are not separated from the principal subject, but make part of the idea that he forms of it. I have seen a child of nine months old weep bitterly, and refuse his breakfast, because the cup and saucer and the spoon were not in their accustomed position. By taking advantage of this disposition in little children, we might easily give them the love of order. The desire of seeing every thing ranged in its place, becomes natural to them, if we but manifest it in the slightest degree ourselves. When we think of the bitter regrets which the absence of orderly habits brings in its train, we ought the more assiduously to endeavor to instil them into children. A vague idea of duty is associated with them — and duty is itself perhaps but moral order of the highest kind.

The love of neatness has the same source: a spot is a derangement, a disorder. The natural disgust which is associated with it adds the repugnance of the senses to that of the mind. Modesty is also of the same family, and there is nothing easier than to inspire in children that instinctive modesty, which, when stripped of design, is but the more innocent.

This last object, too much neglected in early infancy, is, notwithstanding, very important. At the risk of appearing absurd, I will say that it is especially so for young boys. Custom alone so severely imposes the law of decorum upon young girls, that, unless from singular neglect, their manners in early life are not exposed to any danger. But it is not the same with regard to men; schools are a peril to them, and the manner in which the child is affected by bad examples, depends entirely upon his first impressions. Mothers ought, therefore, to be attentive, they ought to inspect the nurse, and not permit her to associate in the mind of the child the idea of pleasure with indecency. The care of his own person should be confided to him as early as possible, and he should attend to its requirements in solitude. From that time he often acquires a modesty apprehensive and almost severe; but how can we fear the excess of a quality, which is so nearly allied to dignity of soul?

There are sentiments of morality apparently of the most elevated kind, which proceed from a simple association of ideas, and consequently from habit: such is respect for the property of another. The child lives much through the medium of his eyes; the objects which he constantly sees about the person that he loves, make part of herself in his memory; the clothes, the little appendages which she uses, are of great consequence in his estimation; he thinks of her accompanied by her attributes, as we see the heathen gods; and when he observes that she alone makes use of these objects, he is persuaded that they become a part of her. He is even jealous of them for her sake, guards them like a faithful dog, and prevents others from approaching them. I have seen a little girl of eighteen months old, who would weep if any one touched the basket of her nurse, in walking. One day, when the same child saw a woman whom she did not know, carry a dress

of her mother's from the house, she uttered loud cries — a scene which was repeated on the morrow. Since then she has manifested inquietude at the sight of strangers, and when they depart with empty hands, she conducts them with an affected politeness, that but ill conceals her relief.

This sentiment which is easily increased by exercise, may give a precocious integrity to very young children. They possess it naturally, and can transfer it from one person to another; being different in this respect from dogs, who have a regard for their master alone, and then only when they have been trained. Children of eighteen months at the English school in Spitalfields, do not touch the fruits of the garden; and respect the little appropriated grounds of their companions. It is true that the masters set them a good example in this respect, and that they never fail in restoring to the pupils their little playthings after they have been sometimes deprived of them. This precaution is very necessary, not only on account of the powerful influence of the imitative instinct, but because it may be possible to communicate the precious quality of complaisance. It is only when the child is perfectly secure from the fear of losing his own property, that it gives him pleasure to make others enjoy it. He is sometimes led by it to consider the right of lending, or of giving, as the happiest privilege attached to possession; and the spirit of preservation may be even connected in his mind with that of generosity.

The sentiment of general benevolence, which we should endeavor to maintain, conducts so naturally to habits of politeness, that we may almost lay aside the task of forming them. It is only essential to strengthen them, before timidity, the consequence of a self-love which is more developed, begins to manifest itself. Nevertheless, if the course of a truly religious education was thoroughly

followed, the child would pass insensibly from sympathy to charity, to the love of others; and savage pride or irritable vanity would not arise in him.

It is thus, that those qualities which are the happy fruits of first habits, become confounded with natural qualities, and that a similar charm is attached to them. We possess them modestly, without supposing that we could do otherwise than possess them; and he who would trace them back to their origin, might see with gratitude one of the greatest and most incontestible benefits that he could owe to education.

CHAPTER II.

HABIT OF OBEDIENCE.

"The duty of obedience, is the only one comprehended by little children."—ELIZABETH HAMILTON.

OF all the habits of childhood, the most necessary to form is that of obedience, since by means of it, we can make or break, at will, all others. I here regard docility as the result of habit; although we might present it under an aspect more elevated, and consider it as a moral obligation. But at the tender age of which I speak, the practice of obedience gradually awakens the idea of duty; whilst the idea of duty cannot as yet impose obedience.

In consulting observation, we see that there exists in children an innate instinct of independence; it is also from dispositions equally natural that their will submits to ours, at least when we conduct ourselves with consistency and firmness. They often adopt our desires through sympathy; besides, they have often proved that it is useless to resist us, and they at length feel that they belong to us, and rejoice that they do. A little girl of a year old, no sooner has a doll, than she regards it as her child, judging that this tie of the heart renders her possession more complete. So children soon comprehend that they are our

property; they see our love and solicitude, and this proves to them that they are of all things most precious to us.

From a similar idea, imperfectly conceived, no doubt, it follows that little children find naturally enough, that we forbid them from certain acts. As it is often done for their preservation, and sometimes for that of the material objects which belong to us, there is nothing in the prohibitions which astonish them, although they are constantly forgetting them. But it is not the same with orders; they have more difficulty in comprehending them, and are less docile in conforming to them; and notwithstanding they are often more agreeable, the commandment *requires* an action whilst the prohibition *interdicts* one. Then if the action is of a nature to please them, it is sufficient merely to indicate it. To enjoin imperatively upon a little child to execute an order repugnant to him, would be uselessly to compromise our authority, which as yet is scarcely established.

Such a distinction would not be on the whole admissible, since the principal design for which authority is confided to us, the safety of the child, demands that we have the power of commanding, as well as forbidding; but it seems, however, that in the difference of his submission in the two cases, there is a discernment sufficiently refined for the legitimate rights of a free being. The child is weak, he is helpless; we can deprive him of every thing, even dispose of his person, because he has not the means of resisting; but his soul is independent. We cannot make him act in defiance of himself, and he is astonished at the attempt. There is a degree of nobleness in this sentiment, a germ of dignity which ought not to be suppressed with violence. To reconcile in the mind of the child respect for firmness of character, with the necessity of obtaining obedience from him, is perhaps one of the difficulties of education, but not an insurmountable one.

Indeed, if the docility of infancy is composed of elements the purest and most natural, there is nothing degrading to the soul in such a disposition. Sympathy is a principle exempt from baseness: to abstain from a useless effort is the counsel of a dawning reason, perfectly conformed to our reason: to believe that he belongs to his parents, is the effect of a tender confidence in the child, which will at some future day be the source of filial devotion, a sublime and touching principle, the only one among the human virtues that can merit the name of piety. A reciprocal possession, if I may so speak, is the distinctive character of that intimate relation of father and son, a relation unique in the world for its sanctity, for the depth and disinterestedness of the sentiments which belong to it.

Thus, a long time before the period when the child can be responsible for his motives, we may, without bringing fear into action, or touching any other spring than that of sympathy and the most simple foresight, we may, I say, give him the habit of docility. From that time notwithstanding the vicissitudes and the tumults which our imperfect wisdom cannot, or does not know how always to prevent, we are generally in possession of power, and it only remains to us to use it well.

It is astonishing that any distinction has been made in this respect between the interests of children and our own, since these interests must be the same in all cases. Excessive severity constitutes the torment of fathers and children in every family where it exists, as much as the exercise of a sweet and gentle authority sheds peace and happiness around it.

Docility, it is said by some, has but a temporary merit: it is not in itself a virtue, because the child is not destined to yield forever, nor to yield to all the world.

This last point is assuredly indisputable; but after all, the child ought always to be obedient to something, and

never make his caprice his only law. Man in infancy obeys his parents; then, the idea of duty that they have instilled into him; and after that, the simple idea of duty, which has acquired an independent growth within him. The object of obedience alone changes, the virtue remains.

But even if we refuse to it this great name; if submission be but the necessary condition on which to receive the benefits of education, still it would be necessary that this condition be fulfilled. Without the full enjoyment of authority, the parents would not be able to acquit themselves of their noble task. Tell them to use power with moderation, with justice; but if you should go to them and deprive them of its possession, their responsibility would be annulled.*

That there existed in life an imperious obligation, a duty august and sacred, without a legitimate means for performing it, would be in itself contradictory. Now there is nothing which can be more seriously imposed on us, both by divine and human laws, than the care of bringing up our children. All benefits of which we can form

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* It is not left for the parent to choose between the exercise of his power over his child, and its abdication. Kings may lay aside their sceptres, but the authority of the parent is a *divine right*, a delegation from on high, and must be maintained, however disagreeable the duty may sometimes prove. Teachers as well as parents, must, when occasion calls, assert their authority. They must govern, or be themselves despised and trampled upon by those, who are penetrating enough to see that a shadow of power, without energy, is contemptible. No one ever gained the affections of the young, by thus shrinking to fulfil all the obligations which the care and education of others imposes. But it is seldom that a firm, decided, energetic government does not obtain more than respect from those who are the subjects of it; if combined with affection and gentleness of manners, it will always secure love in hearts capable of affection. [Ed.]

any idea, safety, health, instruction, a good conscience, the love of others, we ought as much as possible to give to the enjoyment of our children. We are answerable for these cherished beings before God and the world; and would authority, the only simple means of fulfilling our obligations, be refused to us? And would not nature, in delivering them to us, feeble, naked, without reason, and without knowledge, but lay a snare for us? She would have endowed us with all kinds of superiority in order to reduce us to the employment of artifice! Virtue, knowledge would suffice no longer! It would be necessary to have the subtlety of a diplomatist, and the talent of a comedian, to invent, prepare, and enact scenes in order to accomplish our best projects; to obtain the smallest concessions from infancy! Ah! if it were necessary to renounce truth, paternity would be purchased at too dear a price!

I am yet speaking merely of the first rudiments of obedience; but when I develope this great subject, we shall see how those methods of persuasion, by which we often attempt to obtain an influence over the will in education, are false, weak, and absurd. We shall see how seldom children are duped by them; and that the conflict which takes place between them and us, together with the dissimulation and reciprocal indecision which result from it, are destructive even to the energy which we had designed to establish by our management. The troubles arising from a harsh and despotic education, are great; but the fault of enervating the will, cannot be laid to its charge. An old sergeant, who has all his life been obedient to his captain, fails not in firmness with his soldiers; these, restored to their homes, have habits rather too imperious; and in the energetic ages, the power of parents over children was unlimited. The strength of the will, like most of our qualities, is propagated by example, and it possesses the same indecision, the same artifice, the same love of procrastination.

But what decides the question is, that if parents abandon their rights in theory, they resume them when necessary in practice; and that such an opinion, if adopted, would bring with it but contradictions and inconsistencies. Never will they renounce the exercise of their authority; in this relation they cannot renounce it; love is too great, the interest too lively, the responsibility too strong. They will not abjure human nature. When have we seen men abstain from the exercise of power, when they are not restrained either by fear, or respect to mankind, or by conscience? And let us not believe that a frigid system of education, can ever penetrate into the recesses of the heart. Rousseau has in vain alarmed you on the lawfulness of your empire; as soon as your child shall expose himself, I do not say to a real danger, but to a slight inconvenience, imagining, perhaps, when he shall only importune you to a certain point, you will take him in your arms, you will carry him. Your scruples, your resolutions, your principles, drawn from Emilie will be forgotten, and nature will triumph. I shall do wrong then, you will say. Yes, undoubtedly; but the real wrong is, to have adopted principles which your holiest duties as well as your most rational sentiments oblige you to violate.

That a child who has not been early imbued with the idea that the paternal will is something sacred, that a child whom we have treated as an equal, in reasoning with him, in persuading him, sees something odious in the brutal abuse of force, is certainly not astonishing. The employment of reason supposes, in the being to whom it is addressed, a right not to be convinced; that of solicitation, a right not to attempt the thing which they engage to do: there is then treachery in your conduct, and rebellion; frequently the loud cries of the child, will show that he feels it to be so. You must expect that whenever in future you recommence a course of reasoning, he will antici-

pate the result, and will listen to you but just so far as it is necessary to put you in the wrong, by refuting you. Hence proceeds an insupportable relationship,—that of a father and child, each timid and hypocritical in his manner; each aiming to obtain his desire, without coming to the point; distrustful of each other, and finishing by ill-humor or by open rupture. This last result is in fact that which is most pleasing to the child. In order to punish you, he obliges you to use violence, and compels you to be a tyrant, for the want of knowing how to be a father. Chicanery, selfishness, caprice, obstinacy, although destitute of real firmness, are, alas! the too ordinary fruits of this imperfect subordination.

Too rigorous heretofore, domestic discipline, is now, perhaps, too much weakened: if its principle is changed, if it is no longer that of submission to power, it ought to be that of submission to duty. It should be governed by a spirit more pure, more moral — that respect for the paternal will, which expresses to the child the will of God.

There is, in the education of infancy, a principal idea which ought to predominate over all others, and serve as a rallying point to them. This idea is that of protection. Let the mother, (since in speaking of very young children, it is to her especially that I address myself,) let the mother invest herself strongly with this principle, and the whole system of her conduct will be regulated by it. She will see the happiest proportions established between severity, and indulgence— between love and firmness. Without love, protection is not vigilant; it will not extend over the happiness, over all the interests of the young existence: without firmness and the degree of severity which necessarily accompanies it, it is no longer protection. That which yields, cannot serve as a support; and the child wants to be supported. Not only has he need of it, but he desires it; his most constant tenderness is

purchased only at this price. If you are to him in effect like another child, if you partake his passions, his continual changes, if you participate all his emotions, increasing them whether it be by contradiction, or by an excess of complaisance — he will be able to use you as a plaything, but not to be happy in your presence: he will weep, he will mutiny, and a season of disorder and ill-humor will be connected with your idea. You have not been the protector of your child, you have not preserved him from that perpetual fluctuation of the will, which is the malady of feeble beings who are the sport of a feeble imagination; you have neither secured his peace, his wisdom, or his happiness — why should he believe you to be his mother?

In truth the laws we shall impose will lead to contradictions, and will associate the idea of evil, with certain actions in themselves innocent. But at the age of which I speak, he does not yet act from the knowledge of good and evil. The question is not, to enlighten the conscience but to accustom the child to listen to its voice such as it is. He has a morality derived from sympathy, the only one he can have. Good, with him, is to satisfy those he loves; evil, to be blamed by them; the poor child knows nothing more of either. Even if he has done nothing, he believes himself culpable, if he sees in the eyes of his mother the expression of discontent; and if he has caused real sorrow, if in a moment of impatience he has struck her, his repentance amounts almost to despair. On a similar occasion I have seen a little child, who, without being threatened or even rebuked, renounced all his plays, and, his heart bursting with grief, went to conceal himself in an obscure corner, with his face turned against the wall.

Inconstant and variable as this sentiment is, it is, nevertheless, the first dawning of conscience. The desire of agreeing with his mother, will become in the child the love of duty, the wish to harmonize with God, with that

which can best represent him to us upon earth. This sentiment may be indeed exhausted by making too frequent and injudicious calls upon it, in the same way that the body is enfeebled by want of aliment, exercise, and social intercourse; but this is the fate of all sentiments belonging to this world. All wither in inaction, as they wear out by an imprudent and premature excitement. A child, in whom the germ of conscience which exists in him has not been cultivated, does not possess moral life.

To abstain, as Rousseau would have us, from imposing any duty upon the child, before he had a knowledge of the various social relations upon which his duties were founded, would be to dissolve the most intimate and sacred of these relations. At the age when the young man knows exactly how to define the origin of family relations, and their influence upon the organization of society, he can almost do without his parents, and is no longer united to them by the tie of necessity. It would besides be to deviate from the natural path, which Rousseau intends to follow so closely. Nature brings the affections into play, a long time before reason; she does not proceed in methodical order: in her we can take hold of no beginning, we cannot take her by surprise in her creations, and she always seems but to develope. In the child every thing is in the germ, nothing is yet expanded; the important point is to teach him to act for himself. To suppose in him principles, sentiments, and sometimes even knowledge which he has not acquired, is often the best way of communicating all these in education.

In coming to the application, I shall here indicate the best means of obtaining early obedience. In the beginning, while the habits, yet passive, consist in the expectation of our actions, the important point for us, is uniformity of conduct. We ought to guard the child from surprises which shock him, and rudely break the course of his

impressions. When the preparations for our designs permit him to discover them, our intention, if always accomplished, will gradually become a law to him. In the same manner that he has ceased to oppose our projects, he will afterwards renounce the execution of his own, if he can with certainty foresee our opposition. It is, at first, actions alone which establish our authority, for our words produce no effect on little children, but when they announce our conduct. '*My dear, I am going to take away this knife from you*,' gradually becomes '*Lay down the knife;*' and one is equivalent to the other. We ought not to prohibit what we cannot prevent, but we ought always to prevent what we have begun to prohibit. To order active obedience, is, as I have said, dangerous to authority; and even with regard to prohibitions it is useless to hope that the child will at first believe them permanent; he will see only the expression of your will for the moment. In vain have you wished to fetter him for the future; he does not comprehend your claims. 'You must never climb upon the chairs,' is to him, 'I wish you not to climb upon this chair now.' He will also disobey you a long time, without real rebellion, in your presence, and with greater inducement away from you, because he fears nothing but your displeasure. But when he shall have often associated the idea of your disapprobation, with that of a certain act, he will at length abstain from performing it. And if he passes from your hands only into those of a person, who prevents the same things, by the same means as yourself, by degrees he will feel himself under the dominion of a law, which will control him even in thought.

It is above all necessary, when you would obtain submission, to beware of playfulness. This supposes equality, and as soon as we laugh, we may resign our authority. Sport often with your child — manifest to him the tenderest love — but, when once obedience is demanded, smile

no longer; caress no longer, do not even solicit. You exercise a sacred right — and the feeling of this right is weakened in the soul of your child, as well as in yours, whenever you employ such various resources.

Children will attempt, in a thousand ways, to accomplish their little projects, or to disarm your resistance. Enticement, importunity, buffoonery, all are in turn employed by them. We often see them venturing a succession of contradictions, so graduated that we cannot find a moment to stop them. These attempts are owing to our feeble, and undecided manner of commanding. We have spoken lightly, and have been lightly listened to. Before pronouncing any command, it is necessary that a greater seriousness, something more imposing in the countenance, should announce to the child that the mother speaks, and that the companion of his sports has disappeared. An expression of decision and calmness is then important. If, instead of elevating the voice, we suddenly depress it, we seem to address that which is the most closly connected with the child, his conscience.

The following is a penal code for children of two years old, the observance of which might save severer measures.

Disobedience caused by forgetfulness. Opposition to the continuance of the act, renewing the prohibition of it amicably. Disobedience a little more voluntary. Assume a serious air, and inform the child that if he repeats it, you will deprive him of the means of disobeying. Disobedience entirely voluntary. Put the threat in execution, by making, silently, such material arrangements as shall render disobedience impossible.

In this last case, the child ordinarily assumes ill-humor: he seeks to punish you; he caresses with affectation some other person; in short, he endeavors in every way to disoblige you. If he does not exceed the prescribed limits, you will take no notice of his intention; but if he is decided

upon rebellion; if, vexed that you persist in not observing his light faults, he is determined to commit greater ones; then, since all the actions of the child are reprehensible, you determine to put an end to them at once. Without saying a word, you take the little culprit by the hand, and with seriousness and firmness seat him in a chair, or, if you think proper, confine him in some other place. It is then curious to observe how he mingles the bursting forth of his cries, with a secret triumph that he has at last succeeded in moving you. Render this triumph as small as possible, by preserving a perfect calm. This, by the way, shows the danger of anger; which if indulged, would give at once a bad example, and an unhallowed pleasure to the child. Return quietly to your occupations, and be assured that tears will soon cease, or change their nature: in a short time, there will be a faint appeal to your commiseration, and the least regard to it will determine the culprit to throw himself in your arms. There will then be a moment of overflowing tears, and a reconciliation tender and cordial. The child will say that he is sorry; a word more easily obtained, and more sincerely pronounced, than a sad demand for pardon. You want the expression of tender regret, that of a real return to good temper; you seek not the humiliation of your child.*

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* We agree with the author, that it is not generally best to require of very young children positive duties; and yet this may sometimes be necessary. Difficult cases of government occasionally arise from this necessity. Mrs. L. was teaching her little daughter, between two and three years old, to count upon her fingers; the child went on very well to ten; here she stopped; the mother said 'ten,' and added 'you must remember the next time;—it is the little finger, and when you call the one before it nine, you will then think of ten.' The process of counting was recommenced, but having said nine, the child laughed and affected ignorance — the mother began to look serious, and said 'ten,' which the child repeated several

We here see how words and actions may be successively employed to great advantage; when they are not

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times successively after her. But, so often as the counting was renewed, the child stopped at ten, waiting for her mother to tell her. At first, the mother thought she might have forgotten, but being at length convinced that she was obstinate, she began to treat her with severity. Telling her in the first place that she should punish her if she refused to call the ten when she came to it, and at length seating her in disgrace at a distance from herself. After a long course of discipline, varied in different ways, the little girl, who had maintained perfect self-command, said, 'I will be good, I will count ten.' She then began, and when she came to this number, as if making a violent effort to conquer herself, she said 'ten,' and burst into a violent fit of weeping. Her mother soothed her, and told her how much better it was to be obedient than to be wilful, and how she had been pained to be obliged to punish her. She then required that she should repeat the counting many times, in order to confirm her obedience. Soon after, the child's aunt, Mrs. W., entered the room, and her mother desired that she would show her aunt how many she could count; the child began, but when she had said nine, her face reddened, and her countenance expressed the same determination as she had before shown; 'What is the next, Mama?' said she. Her aunt who understood the case, said, Come with me, and took the child into her apartment, considering very properly that the last offence was towards herself. Several hours of probation did the little creature suffer before she would again yield. Yet she was calm, very polite, and obedient in most other things. Her aunt once told her to go into a corner of the room—'The child' (that was her way of calling herself, in imitation of her grandmother who always spoke of her in this manner,) 'will go,' says she, 'if aunt W. will go and hold the candle.' After a series of experiments in order to influence the will, it at length gave way to necessity, and the little girl counted ten until her aunt ventured to restore her to her mother; who was not again disappointed in a return of obstinacy on this point. But the same child, when learning to read would sometimes stop at a particular letter or word which her mother knew very well she understood. On these occasions she had only to say, 'E. have you forgotten to count ten?' and the hesitation was at once overcome. Would not the character of this child have been essentially different had she obtained a victory over her mother at that time? [Ed.]

used at the same moment, it is easier to preserve calmness, and we may produce more of an impression.

Scolding and vociferation frighten children, more than they correct them; and cause more tears than true repentance. It should be remembered that punishments (and severe reprimands are the same thing,) are designed only to ameliorate the dispositions of the heart; every other motive would make us reprehensible; every other result would declare us ignorant and unskilful. In education, the duty of protecting happiness ought not to yield to any but that of preserving innocence, which is a condition necessary to happiness, and is of more value.

CHAPTER III.

THIRD YEAR. — ACTIVITY.

"Activity is the truest pleasure of life, or, to speak more properly, life itself."—WILL. SCHLEGEL.

IF we doubted the innumerable benefits which the goodness of God has shed on our existence, it would be only necessary to look at little children. The simplest events cause them joy unspeakable. Even the necessary movements of life—the acts of seeing, of walking, and of speaking, are all sources of pleasure to them. The transports of these poor little beings, teach us to know the worth, the intrinsic and primitive value of the thousand benefits which our abundance causes us to overlook. We do not speak correctly when we say that habit has rendered these enjoyments nugatory. We no longer experience their novelty; but they still shed a certain charm upon our days. In them lies the secret of our attachment to life; and when called to part with them, we feel this to be the case; we are insensible to the happiness they give, because accustomed to it.

After the age of two years, a remarkable development is ordinarily affected in children: there is more decision in their desires, more motive in their will: every thing in their manner of existence is less vague, and more sig-

nificant; and their movements more rational, and more graceful, have a more definite object. They form designs independent of ours; and their less passive existence, becomes more manifest in their conduct, as well as in their little conversations. These two different expressions of it will be successively the subject of our examination.

The pleasure of exerting their powers, is inexhaustible in children: it is sufficient for them to have the idea of an action in order to try it, and all that they see performed, they attempt to do. Thus they become interested in the exterior of every thing; they imitate our movements, and our various operations, without troubling themselves about causes, or effects. Their mother puts a needle through her work, their father traces black lines upon a paper; these are very natural amusements, in which they take their part whenever they can. A pleasure is sufficient in itself—it does not need an object to induce them to pursue it. But we feel the necessity of one as we progress in life, inasmuch as the enjoyment attached to the simple action becomes weakened.

Observe a flock of children of different ages. One just beginning to walk, draws with pride a little empty carriage, the noise of the wheels behind him is sufficient for his happiness; another, a little larger, takes possession of the carriage, and must needs place a doll in it; one still greater, thinks the doll must play a part; at last, if the carriage falls into the hands of a child five or six years old, he will fill it with sand, grass, or straw; he wishes to perform field-labors, which have already some shadow of reality. The pure and simple desire of activity, then, that of the pleasures of imagination, and afterwards that of real or supposed activity—these are the gradations of the moral necessities of childhood.

To furnish continual food for the activity of children, without employing stimulants which are too forcible, is perhaps the epitome of education. It is the only means

of advancing intelligence—but at present, wisdom, or the formation of character occupies us exclusively.

For this object the exercise of the moral faculties is necessary: external movements, sensations, where the soul is passive, do not long suffice for children; they may even experience fatigue from them: the diversions of this kind that we give them are often too prolonged, whilst mental activity finds its own limit, and stops before it becomes immoderate. We ought above all, then, to endeavor to bring this activity into exercise. Ill temper, moral disorganization, and frowardness in children, are almost always caused by weariness: the secret of rendering them good, is to occupy their minds.

In poor families, where the mother has good sense and sweetness of temper, little children are perhaps more rational and more forward, than in any others; they also enjoy peculiar advantages. They become interested in all they see; they understand and take a part in it. All the occupations of the household are in their sight, and they often participate in them. To wash, to spread out the linen, to pull and cook the vegetables; this succession of varied labors which they witness, which they even aid in executing, gives exercise to the mind, and inspires them with the desire of being useful, at the same time that it amuses them. Occupied, without occupying others, their life is not taken up with self; and they have the feeling of a common interest, in which each one concurs according to his power. What can be better for a child?

It is not thus in families where parents have another vocation. Our more elevated occupations, our children are absolutely strangers to; and not leaving our minds at liberty, cause them a mortal weariness. If we suspend our labors from complaisance, they immediately see that we seek to divert them: sometimes, also, we wish to caress them, that they may love us; and this intention, being too

evident, becomes more difficult to accomplish. The child is exacting, capricious, and difficult: the parents, who seek to please him, are not destitute of affectation in their efforts to place themselves upon a level with him: the intercourse is in every way unnatural; they meet not upon the solid ground of services rendered, wishes satisfied, actions reciprocated: every thing passes in demonstrations, in exhortations, in pleasantries—that is to say, in words, light things, addressed to beings already light.

It is then to divers plays, or in other words to the pleasures of imagination, that we are obliged to have recourse, in order to render ourselves agreeable in our families. We hold these young minds under the empire of illusion, and to exercise their activity, we furnish children in a thousand diversions, with the means of imitating real life; it is assuredly a great resource, and one favorable to the progress of intelligence; but as far as it relates to character, truths which would interest them, are of more value.

In this very important respect, we might turn to the greatest advantage, the love of action which children manifest. Feelings slowly developed, would easily receive an impulse from the allurement of a pleasure so simple. Fraternal love, which is sometimes very tardy in displaying itself, will serve me for an example. A young child, who has for a long time been the sole object of the cares and indulgence of his mother, often looks upon the coming of a little rival with chagrin. Jealousy, that disposition of the elder brother, will be awakened, if we do not guard against it. He is blamed, rebuked, and forced to yield his playthings to the little babe as soon as it has acquired a fancy for them. What is the consequence? that he loves it every day a little less—its appearance awakens in him only painful thoughts—he looks on it as the cause of his sorrows, and a tone of contention and envy becomes established between the children, which is

often strengthened during their intervals for play, and is sometimes but too much prolonged during life. You might have prevented this unhappiness by giving to the elder, as early as possible, an active part about the younger. If he had apparently aided in getting him to sleep, in dressing him; if, after having made him carefully sit down, the little one had been placed upon his knees, the most lively sympathy would have been called into action; he would have believed himself the protector of his brother, and have conçeived for him the tenderest affection.

Miss Hamilton, in her estimable work, relates a very interesting fact. She saw in a part of the country bordering on Scotland, two poor children, the elder of which, at the age of three years, had been constantly left with the care of his younger brother. He watched over him, dressed, fed him, never abandoning him a moment; fulfilling all the duties of the most attentive mother. When the hour of repast approached, he took his charge into the hut, lighted a little fire, which he managed very skilfully, and prepared the simple aliment which sustained them both. 'Take care, Daniel,' said somebody to him, as he gave food to his littte charge—'take care not to burn your brother.' 'There is no danger,' replied he, 'I always taste the first spoonful.' Very important results might be drawn from such a recital. This elder brother will not certainly be a selfish man!*

* Nothing is more true than that the more we do for one, the dearer that object becomes. A young girl of eleven years, who had long been the pet of the family, showed a desire to minister to her little step-brother, and the mother was pleased to have her do it, because she wished them to love each other. She would dress and undress the baby when three or four months old, and at ten months would persuade the nurse to let him sleep with her, getting up with alacrity in the night, to warm his milk, when he was thirsty. This devotion on her part, was returned by the lively affection of the infant, whose eyes never sparkled with more sincere delight than when his young sister stretched out her arms to take him. [Ed.]

We should do wrong, assuredly, if in thus seeking to develope the affections, we commenced by demanding sacrifices. We cannot obtain devotion, unless we permit the sentiment to grow, which produces it. This is, however, the fault which we often commit. If a little beggar comes to the gate, we talk to the child about it in a touching manner — we exhort him to benevolence — and the conclusion is, that he ought to give the bread or the pear which he holds in his hand. This is a very bad method. Send him to seek such food, or clothing, or such things, in short, as will not fail to cause lively emotions of joy, in the little indigent boy, and your child will soon feel such a pleasure in giving, that in order to procure it he will even deprive himself of his own portion.*

A sentiment, yet undecided, cannot successfully contend either with personal interest, or self-love: it would be imprudent to bring it in competition with inclinations strong-

* There are few children, we think, who are not fond of giving to the poor; the books which twenty years ago were written for the young, were careful to treat of benevolence as the most noble of all the virtues — and indeed when rightly understood it cannot be too highly appreciated. But there is no generosity in a child's giving away the property of his parents; nor should the indiscriminate relief of beggars be encouraged. We have known children of two years old behave insolently to their parents, when forbidden to give something valuable, to one whose claims to charity were of a dubious kind. They had read so many stories of generous children, that they felt an ardor to distinguish themselves by some act, which would entitle them to rank among the little heroes and heroines of their imagination; — they were indignant at any opposition to their noble purposes, and scarcely attempted to conceal their contempt for what they thought the unfeelingness of their parents' hearts. That generosity which involves self-denial, cannot be too much commended in children; nor can we be too careful to teach them to discriminate between acts of charity and such as encourage idleness, and afford the means of indulgence to the intemperate and vicious. [Ed.]

er than itself; but strengthen it with exercise, let the remembrance of happy efforts, of enterprizes crowned with success become associated with it, and the pleasure which has proceeded from activity, will be referred to the sentiment. It will be fortified by the idea of the obstacles it has surmounted, and will become truly capable of vanquishing great ones.

A partial analysis would undoubtedly discover self-love even here; but how shall we prevent an impure alloy from mingling with our best impulses? When vanity and sensuality—in a word, when selfish motives occupy the fore-ground, they are the ones which become strong by exercise; the pleasure which activity gives, turns to their profit; but if they are in the shade ever so little, if motives truly good and generous mingle with them, though it be only in a small degree, the imagination will dwell on the more noble sentiments. It is to them the child will attribute the satisfaction he experiences. Hence, many of the rewards which are of a doubtful tendency, and the stimulants which address themselves to the bad passions of the human heart, produce not, in the application of them, all the evil which might be feared. Their influence becomes balanced in the soul, and the salutary results of activity prevent in children the bad effects of the means employed to excite them. But, is this fact a sufficient justification for parents?

The idea of turning to advantage the love of action in children—bringing them to an earlier acquaintance with real life, animated by its various interests—this idea, I say, will at some future day assuredly become the principal pivot of education. We are already on the way to this result,* and when we shall apply ourselves especially to

* I will quote, as an example of this new mode, Hazlewood Institute in England, although I am far from adopting all the principles which it has set before teachers in a very intellectual work 'On Public Education.' [Ed.]

calling into action pure and disinterested feelings, we may hope for real progress in the art of educating future generations. But, if teachers look more to the success of the moment, than to the design of the efforts by which this success is to be obtained; if they are less occupied with the dispositions of the heart, than with outward acquirements, they will never be able to give a full development to all the faculties of the soul. When the moral qualities do not reach their true grandeur, the intellectual powers themselves will suffer from it. 'The beauty of the king's daughter is *within*" — says the Psalmist.

CHAPTER IV.

PROGRESS OF THE THIRD YEAR. — TRUTH.

"We conjure you to sacrifice every thing to truth." — SAURIN.

THE progress of the child as manifested in the acquirement of language, is more interesting perhaps than in any thing else. All is novel, characteristic, and is closely connected with moral feeling. From the cradle, the infant has more or less distinctly desired, loved, and exercised his faculties and powers. His development in these various respects, has operated by gradations so insensible, that we have with difficulty followed the course of them, and have supposed it to be nearly the same in every individual: but from the moment the child speaks, the subject brightens: his impressions, his thoughts, have each their distinguishing seal — we remember, we repeat his words. It seems as if day had dawned upon his character and mind, and that we shall henceforth know the beings we have to deal with.

It would certainly be very essential to know this, but some study is necessary in order to do it. Open and ingenuous as children are, they are not always exactly sincere; and we find in them a singular mixture of artifice and simplicity. Sympathy, that instinct which is so remarkably developed in them, tends rather to deceive them

in the use of language. While they are yet very young, they believe it is made either to please others, or to obtain their own desires, and not to declare truth, — a thing of which they have very little idea. Why should a child endeavor to make his expressions correspond with facts? of what consequence is the past to him, the little history of his daily life? he hardly preserves the remembrance of it. That which interests him is to be caressed; to have us give him what he wants. In vain will you interrogate him on what he has done, he will only give such answer as he thinks will be agreeable. 'I have done what will please you,' would be at the age of two years, the most natural response.

It is said to be the same with savages. A traveller finds it very difficult to obtain from them the simplest directions; he cannot learn what route to follow, so much are they occupied in discovering his interest, or rather their own, in this occurrence; and all to whom he addresses himself, will give different replies. A sort of deceit seems innate in children. They learn to avoid falsehood in words, but they still practise it in action; for actions themselves are but falsehoods, when their object is to manifest what is not true. Hence proceeds complicated deceit, since it is a deceitful language which expresses a false thing. The poor children however do not make very profound combinations; but they have, almost at birth, inclinations to hypocrisy, at once prompt and subtle.

A child of eighteen months carefully conceals a little basket which has been for a long time the object of his covetousness; then he places himself near his mother very softly; he wishes to be quiet, but too much agitated to succeed in this, he fondles, he caresses her. His blushes, his manner at the same time tender and embarrassed, the excess even of his demonstrations are sufficient to betray him. Whence comes this augmentation of

affection, for there is some sincerity in its manifestations? Does he feel more the value of the union, as he fears its approaching rupture? Has he some compassion for his mother, because he thinks he has deprived her of a valued possession? Does he give vent to his emotion by embraces? What a profound mystery the heart is, even in the tenderest infancy!

Another child borrows an attractive fan from a stranger; then in the hope that she will forget to take it back again, he successively carries her flowers, his old playthings, or any article that he can lay his hand on, offering them to her with the eagerness of the most marked politeness. Another asks for sugar-plums,* or the enjoyment of a similar pleasure, *for his little brother.* Almost all avoid caressing their nurse in the presence of their mother, so well do they understand the key to the maternal heart.

There is undoubtedly nothing more attractive, than the graceful developments, the comic and piquant scenes, that these little artifices give rise to. The stratagems of young girls especially, have so much prettiness, the caresses which accompany them are so beguiling, that one cannot look upon them with severity: we laugh at these stratagems; we relate them before their authors. This is a greater error than we imagine.† Such means ought to

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* The custom of visitors giving children presents has the effect to render them selfish. No wise parent will encourage this practice. We love to see the disinterested delight with which our children welcome our friends; but when we know that their pleasure arises from the expectation of sugar-plums or toys, we feel mortified. And yet if they have reason to expect gifts on such occasions, how natural that they should think more of these than of the givers. [Ed.]

† More than one evil arises from relating before children their clever sayings and doings; besides the bad effect, which the author

be known for what they are, those of artifice; and with woman particularly, perfect rectitude is the best safeguard on which she can rely. The obligation to sincerity is most imperative upon her. Living in a state of dependence in which she owes an account of her conduct to him who is her guide and protector, how shall he direct her, how shall he confide in her, if her accounts are not faithful? In aiming a blow at truth, she escapes from her obedience, and the beauty of the conjugal relation is destroyed.

But of what importance is not truth to the human character? The influence of this principle upon all the moral qualities is so great, that it seems useless to single any. The connection of vice and falsehood is inevitable. We learn at first to dissemble because we do evil, we continue to do evil because we have learned to dissemble. These observations cannot be disputed; they are received maxims; every one knows that sincerity is a virtue securing all others; but it is not sufficiently felt in education, that the possession of this virtue is of pressing, immediate and personal interest to every pupil. We are not aware of the dignity which the most trifling thought acquires from the fact of its veracity. This demands some explanation.

Invisible and immaterial in its essence, the soul can only manifest itself by actions and language. Striking

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has mentioned, of laughing at their little artifices, and repeating them, it renders them vain and affected, to be too much noticed. A fond mother was relating to her company some of the remarkable speeches of her little daughter three years old; the child who stood by listening with great satisfaction, at length pulled her mother by the sleeve, and said, 'now tell them what I said about Mrs. A.' Will this child or the mother be accountable for the weakness which maturer years will but more strikingly exhibit in her character? [Ed.]

and resolute actions, are sufficient to declare mental excellence to all eyes; but these are rare in life. The greater part of human kind, under the restraints of necessity and habits, pass their days without disclosing the inner recesses of the heart by external acts.

It is nevertheless very important for us to know each other. Events are so uncertain; social relations become combined and multiplied in such a variety of ways, that none can tell if the feeblest ties will not suddenly be strengthened; and if an individual now indifferent, may not hereafter influence our destiny. There is a moral character to be unfolded in nations, governments and families; wherefore in all its relations, more or less general, this question occupies the world at large; and gives exercise to all minds from the idlest gossip, to the most enlightened politician.

Our projects for the future, although founded upon conjecture, nevertheless rest upon some data. We fancy that we know what would be on certain occasions, the conduct of certain persons; and we owe this knowledge, whether more or less correct, to the study of his character. If such a study was impossible, if one possessed a nature so reserved and intricate that we could not penetrate it, his existence would be as nothing to us. Never being able to depend upon him, we should leave him silently, and seek truth elsewhere. This is the case when we meet with the false, and affected: and with all those who have cut the link of communication between their soul and ours. They are insignificant in all their doings. If they amuse or instruct us, it is like books; if they serve us it is like machines. But in themselves they are nobody; to us, they do not possess reality. In destroying their natural character, they have in a manner committed moral suicide, and their existence remains unnoticed. We see them dis-

puting about nothing, throwing out gestures and strong expressions—no one heeds them; we smile, and pass on.

Words, this means of communication so charming, and so easy, words have not in themselves any fixed value: they acquire what they possess, from the individual who uses them; and we discover it by indications very delicate, but which taken together, rarely deceive. This value may be very great. A word, pronounced by a certain man, answers for his conduct forever; it is as a part of himself; he will maintain it, cost what it will. His slightest expression bears the imprint of his great soul, and produces a profound impression. On the contrary, the strongest protestations from certain other men pass for nothing; they are useless notes, the signature of which is disregarded.

In obliging your child to adhere to truth then, you insure his moral existence, which is of more consequence to him than that which is merely physical, since life must be but wretched to those who abandoning veracity are constantly exposed to the most humiliating trials. No one speaks of those secret troubles which are the bitter fruits of the want of truth in the character; all are silent on the grief of never being believed, never depended on, never placed in an honorable station of trust. It is a situation too, which it is always necessary to conceal, to mask under vain words, which only serve to prove it.

When we see whole nations sink under the weight of ills, connected with the depreciation of language; when we see that in their misfortunes they scarcely excite pity; that beings distinguished by the most brilliant gifts, and best calculated to move the imagination, in the impossibility of producing an impression, falling into discouragement, or obliged to have recourse to ridiculous exaggeration—a sympton as well as a disastrous effect of the evils which afflict their nation; when, on the contrary, we see

that honest and measured words command respect in other nations, it should be our greatest care to elevate these representative signs of thought, both in public and private education.*

What, in relation to this very important thing, will be the effect of the changes which are continually taking place in the manners of the age? Under the ancient order of society, the obligation to expose life, rather than suffer one's good faith to be called in question, confined, it is true, falsehood within certain limits. But if the barbarous practice of duelling raised the value of words on the one hand, it diminished it on the other, in elevating personal courage above every thing, and substituting bravery for conscience.

The most important influence in every age is exerted by moral and religious sentiment; but there are indications that the new state of things will give a greater and more constant desire for truth. The noble and universal interests which are confided to the choice spirits of a nation, call for all that is honest and sincere: pretexts and subterfuges, condemned to the disgrace of being unveiled, will dare no longer to display themselves. Even in a less elevated sphere, the spirit of association and of enterprise, by multiplying transactions, will augment the desire to be promptly understood. Men of finesse waste too much time, and when we would not distrust their probity we would still avoid business with them, because we never know what they will do. Likewise in education; skillful

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* Strangers, it is true, often judge very unjustly of the inhabitants of a country, where these habits of exaggeration reign. They ought to think that words stripped of their value, are estimated and given for what they are worth, and that no one is deceived by them. But what excuse can we make for such a language, except to say, that it has no meaning! [Ed.]

teachers* have found that active and serious duties among children, charged with important functions, render them tenacious of sincerity, and cause them to possess a sovereign contempt not only for lying, but for every shade of deceit.

If parents shut their eyes upon the consequences of want of truth to their children, yet how can they mistake their own interests as teachers? Are they ignorant that they labor in the dark, so long as the child is insincere? The most cruel uncertainty is shed upon all their care — the time and money that they believed well invested, is perhaps employed in a fatal manner, and perhaps is remotely preparing some of those disastrous discoveries which give true anguish to the parental heart.

A sense of truth is to be cultivated, and we cannot too early accelerate its development. To this effect we should endeavor to make the young child comprehend that his words ought to agree with facts, rather than with his desires, or those of others — a thing that of himself he will not always understand. In relating all the circumstances of events in which he has either been an actor, or a witness, he knows when the recital is a faithful one. He soon knows it so well, that if you commit the least error, he will correct you with a sort of pedantry. It is necessary to thank him in such a case, and make him see the full value which we attach to accuracy.

But we should not only be particular about language,; stratagems should also be discovered. We ought to comprehend, and overthrow them, and show that we are never duped by them. It is not necessary to have an explanation: what cannot be proved, should not be reprimanded. If you receive artful and designing caresses with the most

* Those of the school at Hazlewood.

perfect coldness, and those which proceed from the heart with reciprocated tenderness, the child informed by his conscience, will not mistake your motives. Pretences will be treated in like manner, and without giving them the name they merit, you will always have a reason for refusing them. Exaggerations, boastings, doubtful stories will only obtain from you a grave silence. Nothing will give you so high a place in the mind of the child, nothing will better secure his respect for your knowledge, than the proof that he will thus have of your penetration.

Another object sweeter and no less important, is to secure the confidence of the child. Endeavor to obtain from him a confession of his little faults, and always reward his candor by the fullest pardon. Remember that before the age of reason, the evil of indulgence cannot equal that of exposing veracity to the least danger. We ought particularly to avoid placing children in the way of temptation. We should never interrogate them with regard to their past honesty — never on facts which they would deny, or sentiments which they would conceal — never likewise on the conduct of other children, or that of domestics. Why expose them to betray others? Why place their frail virtue between denunciation, and a lie?

All experiment is dangerous to sincerity, a quality which gathers strength in quietude. We are so often obliged to speak the truth on ordinary occasions; the proportion of falsehood is necessarily so feeble, even in deceitful men, that the habit of veracity is likely to become formed, if interruptions to it are avoided.* Such a habit

* Has not the author reversed the true order of things? Does not nature prompt children to speak truth, and example give them the habit of deception? A young child seeing a cat, is not prompted by nature to say, 'There is a dog;' if there is such a thing as instinct in children, it seems to be to act as they feel, and to speak as

ought not to be too much tried, certainly; but should we dare neglect what would favor the development of conscience? It ought to be remembered that I speak here of infancy. At a later period it may be useful, by pertinent interrogations, to probe secret motives; to strengthen the morality of the child by subjecting it to some proofs: but such attempts appear to me calculated only to weaken what has not yet taken root.

If we have succeeded in making truth respected but a short time, we have come in possession of a powerful means — we are able to manifest confidence. Our esteem, which is in proportion to the correctness of the child's assertions, renders him attentive to his words. And when we no longer doubt what he affirms, when his simplest testimony instantly produces in us full conviction; the sentiment of joy and of dignity which fills his soul, shows him the value of good faith.

But the most essential thing, is to be perfectly correct ourselves. All other interests ought to be sacrificed to that of truth. To deceive a child is not only to set him a pernicious example, but it is to destroy our influence over him for the future; it is to renounce the entire education, of which we are no longer able to be the instrument. Why do we not feel that our power with the minds of children is only based upon the profound and constant persuasion that we are incapable of abusing them? And let us not think that their credulity will be of long dura-

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they think. When the mother gives her child a bitter medicine, and tells him it is good; when she says she is not going away, and slily escapes, the child learns from example to deceive; and self-interest soon prompts him to put this knowledge in practice. We are sorry to differ in opinion from so enlightened an author as Madame de Saussure, but are not willing to attribute to nature what we think is a fault in education. [Ed.]

tion; perhaps it would be if they had not cause to doubt us. But we do not even take the trouble to conceal our bad faith, and the acts of falsehood which we oftenest indulge, in our intercourse with them, together with the vain promises which we make, always conclude by being recognized for what they are, and make an impression upon their minds.

Every thing may be repaired with children, excepting falsehood: be impatient, angry, for a moment unjust; this will be very wrong, but perhaps they will forget it. They are faults to which the will is not accessory, and ineffaceable remembrance only attaches itself to intentional sins. You have, I know, a secret motive which excuses you; but this motive unintelligible to the child, does not justify you in his eyes. It is important to him to know if he can believe you, the whole future, of which he has any idea, is included in this question. If he has always found you literally true, your moral power is yet entire, while on the contrary if he has once proved you false, you are no longer any thing but a material and uncertain instrument, the employment of which not being foreknown, will never be taken into consideration.

The idea of duty is either formed in the child, or it is not. If it is not, you are able to influence him only by hope or fear. Children who have never been deceived, look upon promises, as facts, and a thread is sufficieet to conduct them. If they have been deceived, chains would not do it.

Hence we see the reason why education is difficult among the ignorant. They love their children as much as we do ours, but they believe it is admissible to deceive them, *for their good.* Unaccustomed to govern them by words, they have recourse to chastisement; and notwithstanding the most frightful increase of severity, this soon loses its effect. An obstinacy, which nothing can overcome, produces irritability in the parents, who know not

how to control their own passions, and a course of treatment follows too dreadful for description. The little unfortunate being, seeing himself delivered to a blind and unpitying chance, refuses to care for the future. His pleasures are taken by stealth, and wrapping himself in a state of stupid indifference, as to the consequences of his actions, he remains a stranger to morality, as well as to simple human prudence.

But if the child had already been impressed with the sentiment of duty, what revolution, what disorder takes place in his existence! His father has deceived him — his own father! sad and overwhelming conviction! Even supposing that he dare not condemn the act, supposing that we succeed in persuading him that the dissimulation was lawful, or necessary, yet what confusion does it produce in his mind! All which is clear to him is, that he can no longer believe any thing. Motives above his reach, justify all conduct of which he is the object; he is a poor miserable being to whom no one owes that truth and justice which ought to exist among all men. Great mental dejection is the consequence of such a persuasion, and we may be certain that morality in his dealings with others, will commence only when he shall clearly see it in the conduct of others towards himself.

We cannot make the idea of duty in the child too simple: we cannot too early elevate the dignity of his young spirit, by showing him that he is depended upon, and that we would not unnecessarily wound his self-respect. There is danger undoubtedly of exciting self-love too strongly in education; there is the same disadvantage, as I think, in exalting too much the idea of moral power; but the esteem, shall I say the respect? which men, notwithstanding their imperfections may merit; this esteem the natural inheritance of whoever has not forfeited it, should be accorded in full to the child. He is ignorant

and feeble; the laws, as well as necessity deliver him into our power; but he is not the less our equal, our brother, perhaps he is our superior; nearer than we to the great Source of being, more recently from the hands of the Creator, his nature is more angelic. Innocent in his feelings, a stranger to suspicion as well as fear—joy, security, and noble confidence will beam in his eyes, until sad experience shall have changed the purity of his nature.

The most scrupulous regard to truth in teachers, fails not to produce it in pupils also, and docility in the latter follows of course. A sincere education can alone be, in the main, a mild one; for, since there are points that we wish to obtain decidedly, it is necessary to have recourse to violence, if words fail of effect. This, an enlightened mother will soon feel, and will, if possible, impart to her auxiliaries. She ought especially to direct her nurses in this particular; but here is a great difficulty, perfect sincerity being the rarest quality among the poor, in consequence of a defective education joined to a state of dependence. As the means of removing this difficulty should be taken into consideration, I will conclude by expressing the wish, that in this age, so fruitful in institutions, we should employ ourselves in founding schools for nurses, capable of governing children under six years old. Some establishments, where we might depend upon finding discreet, amiable, and upright persons, would be a benefit of which mothers only could appreciate the value.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE IMAGINATION AT THREE YEARS.

"The faculty in man most vivid, most simple, and most inseparable from himself, is imagination." — ANONYMOUS GERMAN WRITER.

IN early spring the flower of the young elm has already passed away; it has given to the wind its light seed, but the leaves are yet scarcely unfolded. Such is the imagination of childhood. Precocious in its development, and powerful in its effects, although very simple in its forms; it embellishes, animates, and sometimes disturbs the early period of life: we see it surpass all the other faculties in grandeur, and then become gradually reduced to the ordinary proportions, in which it is presented by the men of our climate.

Two kinds of intellectual progress may be distinguished among children; mental development, and the acquisition of knowledge. These reciprocally aid each other. The ever-growing faculties accumulate a fund of facts, which, in their turn, furnish matter for the exercise of the faculties; the spirit of examination is strengthened by multiplying research; memory shows itself to be faithful in proportion as it connects ideas; and the judgment becomes more sound when it compares a multitude of ob-

jects: but it is not thus with imagination, which increases and declines with astonishing rapidity.

If we understand by imagination the mental representation of outward objects, this faculty undoubtedly reigns paramount in the earliest period of life, and together with sympathy forms the entire moral existence of the new-born child. But at that time it is so much obscured by the clouds of infancy, that it is with difficulty manifested externally, and has not yet attained that brilliancy and vigor which a greater manifestation of strength afterwards gives it. It is at the age of three or four years, perhaps, that the features of the infantine imagination are the most striking. Much has been already acquired, and the effects of simple nature it is not easy to discover; but this is the only age in which we observe certain phenomena that can belong only to the imagination.

The child is not yet enlightened by experience: his memory has only collected scattered facts, of which he knows not the general laws; and he has yet no clear idea of the established order of the universe.

Give to a child some sugar-plums in a box, and he will be constantly opening the box, to see if the sugar-plums are still there. Conceal yourself behind a curtain, and the transports of his joy at seeing you again, will prove that it was sad, but not very surprising to him, that you had disappeared. The vivacity of his pleasure on many occasions, is the consequence of being suddenly delivered from certain fears, which were not a source of doubt to us. A sort of obscure personification of inanimate objects, may often add to the strength of his impressions. Not only do dolls become to him living beings, although in reality he knows what they are, but his other play-things, his furniture, the utensils of which he makes use, seem to him not entirely deprived of life; and in the tears which he sheds at their loss there is something much more

tender, than the regret caused by their utility. A genuine pity is combined with them. 'This poor cup,' says he, his heart swelling at the wreck of what he has broken—'I loved it so much.'

The child furthermore believes there is life in every thing that moves. Wind, thunder, flame, wills to overthrow, to roar, and to consume. After three years old, his mind often desires to recur from the idea to the cause. If he has witnessed the construction of something, he asks who formed the mountains, who dug the lake; but from the moment he perceives motion, he seeks for the cause no longer; the river flows, the smoke ascends, without his asking for the reason; a balloon, a flying-kite does not astonish him. Motion is explained to him by life: as he judges of every thing by sympathy, what he can least conceive of, is the absence of sensation.

His total ignorance of the laws of nature, the facility with which he attributes reality to the most singular conceptions, are the causes of the prodigious interest which he takes in his amusements. The idea of a multitude of possible chances keeps him in continual excitement; hence arises his inconstancy. When his attempts have been deceived, and the various combinations lead to nothing new, he becomes weary, his imagination languishes, and the beings that it had animated return to lifeless matter.

These ideas are not so foreign to us as may be imagined; there is in us a confused reverberation of the same kind of impressions, which are yet very perceptible in youth. The taste for material things also, and the power of being amused by them, are always diminishing with age; at least, this is the fact when they flatter neither avarice or vanity, those inclinations of the mature man, which succeed to curiosity, and the imagination of infancy.

The pleasure procured to children by a narration of the simplest history, is because of the liveliness of the pictures in their mind. The images which we conjure up within them, are perhaps more brilliant and highly wrought than real objects would be; a recital brings before them the magic lantern. There is then no need of putting your invention to the rack in order to divert them. Take a child for the principal personage; join to it a cat, a horse, any combination, in short, that makes an image; relate your story with animation, and your auditor will eagerly listen; the interest you excite will amount to a passion. Every time he meets you, he will make you repeat your narrative. But beware of changing any thing. He wishes to see the same scene again, and the least circumstance omitted or added, dissipates the illusion which pleased him.*

We are often astonished to see that very coarse imitations fully satisfy children: we sneer at their want of taste in works of art, while we should rather admire that power of imagination, which renders the illusion possible. Mould as you will a figure of wax, or cut one out of paper, and provided it has some appearance of arms and legs, and a ball put on for a head, to surmount the whole, your work will be a man in the eyes of the child. It will remain such for whole weeks: the loss of one or two members will make no difference, and in the imagination

* We easily comprehend that omissions may be disagreeable, but why also are additions often so? Some further details ought not to make him doubt the reality of the facts which we relate. It is because these facts have already passed in review before his mind, but accompanied by combinations different from those we have described to him the second time. It was represented with other localities, other persons, other clothes. We have deranged his former imagery, and he regrets it. [Ed.]

of the child it will play any part that we would wish to make it. It is not the bad copy, which the child sees, it is the model he has in his head. The figure of wax is but a symbol, which cannot arrest his mind. Let such a symbol be however badly chosen, insignificant, unimportant, and the young soul pierces the veil, arrives at the truth, and contemplates it under its true colors.

This faculty, which permits them to suppose one object in the place of another, is manifested in children, at a very early age. I have seen a child of eleven months old, recognize a very small dog on an engraving. All children are amused with prints after the first year, although neither the form, or size, or the true color of objects are represented upon this flat surface, and by this multitude of black lines. A little girl of eighteen months old, carefully tends her doll: she puts it to bed, feeds it, keeps it from cold, takes it up, reproaches it, and testifies in a manner sometimes rather harsh, the interest that she takes in its morality, at the same time being conscious that it is but play. These are the true dramatic pleasures, those which spring from voluntary illusion, from an illusion which takes forcible possession of the mind, without however leading it into error.

Animals are absolute strangers to this class of ideas. An imitation may deceive them, but when once their mistake is recognized, they take no interest in it. Zeuxis, it is said, had painted some grapes so naturally, that the birds came to banquet on them; but the moment they touched the canvass, they flew far away from it.

The more the imagination of the child is brought into play, the more he has of pleasure. He loves to fancy other things than those he sees, and enjoys the illusion. He is most amused by playthings of his own invention. Faithful copies of real things, therefore, suffer the fate of the things themselves, which soon weary him. He ad-

mires them, he is enchanted by them, but the too precise form of the object restrains his imagination; it represents but one model, and how can he content himself with one amusement? A little soldier well equipped, is but a soldier; he is never the father of the child, or any other personage. It would appear that the young mind is inspired with the sense of originality: he puts every thing in contribution to realize his hopes, and sees in every thing about him, instruments of his pleasure. An ottoman inverted, is a boat or carriage; placed upright, it is a horse, or a table: a piece of pasteboard is a house, a cabinet, a chariot — in short, every thing that he wants. It is necessary to enter into his views, and ever before the age of useful plays, to give the child means to work with, rather than works already completed. Thus some thick boards in the form of books, and susceptible of being placed upon each other in different ways are excellent materials for building, which will prevent him from seeking others; and if the boards are perforated, if he can connect them together in different ways by means of strings, he gives himself up to his genius. When yet very young, we may render him perfectly happy by giving him some sand to play with; things which by turns are to him water, land, a dinner to prepare, &c. Whatever can lend its aid to the fancy of the moment, is a source of inexhaustible pleasure to him.

The entire existence of these little children is dramatic; their life is a pleasing dream, prolonged and supported by design. Incessantly inventing, adorning and acting scenes, their days pass away in fiction, and but for their puerility they would be poets. In truth, all that poets have sung, all that mythology has consecrated, all that superstition has fancied of the life which is spread throughout nature's works is found in lively traits, sometimes burlesqued indeed, in early childhood. Some examples

will suffice to prove the power of imagination at this period.

I know a child of two years and a half old, who passes a part of his time in playing the part of coachman. His horses are two chairs, for which he makes a harness of ribbons. Seated behind on a third, with the reins in one hand, and a little whip in the other, he drives his peaceable coursers. A light balancing of his body shows that he believes himself in motion. By degrees this movement slackens, he falls into a repose approaching sleep, the illusion still continuing. But if some one places himself before the chairs, the immobility of the object, by undeceiving him, destroys his pleasure. Then he is troubled, he is grieved. *Somebody prevents his horses from going forward.*

The same child is occupied regularly in feeding, with imaginary grain, domestic fowls, which are also imaginary. He requires the door of the chamber where he keeps them, to be left open, and if it is shut by accident, he immediately falls to weeping, *We keep his poor ducks and chickens from coming out.**

A father listening at the window, hears his children drawing the bow in the garden. One is a judge of the shot, the others call for his decision. One disputes, one cries, one applauds the victor, one insults the vanquished. The father feels some inquietude. Where did they get the bow and arrow? Can they shoot it, at their age? Will they not do some mischief? Being unable to forbear longer, he descends into the garden, and observes them.

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* A little girl of three years returning from church, said to her father, 'Our hens keep meeting too; the cock rings the bell, the black hen preaches, and the chickens sing.' The father was pleased with the fancy which could thus make use of the most remote analogies, to furnish its imagery. [Ed.]

He sees them glowing, animated, and full of that genuine ardor which accompanies great pleasure. The whole pantomime was perfect; but they had neither bow, arrow, or mark; a wall formed all the material of the exercise.

A deep and sincere feeling is often joined to the illusions of childhood, and the affection of little girls for their dolls has occasionally something touching in it. At the age of four years, when illusion ordinarily begins to dissipate, a child lets fall her cherished doll, and unfortunately breaks its nose. Frightful cries, and terrible despair ensue; which are redoubled by the imprudence of the father, who, not regarding the accident with sufficient seriousness, half laughing, half seeking to repair the deformed visage, crushes the remainder of the broken nose, into an enormous cavity. Grief, mingled with anger, then renders the child so violent, that there is reasons to fear convulsions. We quiet her as we can; we take away the doll, promising to cure it, and at length succeed in getting the little girl to sleep, overcome with weariness. During her slumber we run to the men of handicraft. A fine new face is very skilfully substituted for the old one, and we expect when she awakes the child will be quite satisfied. Not at all; her grief, as lively as ever, has assumed a character of tenderness and bereavement. It is no longer a little fury, it is a true mother to whom we have dared to present another child in the place of her own. Sobs interrupt her words as she cries—'Ah, it is no longer, no longer my doll—I knew it before, and I now know it no longer—do you believe I can ever love this other? Take it away; I do not wish to see it.'

Those who have the care of sick children in the hospital, often find them more gentle and patient than adults. A little girl, who was obliged to have her leg amputated, had submitted to the whole operation without uttering a

complaint, clasping her doll, in the mean time, closely in her arms. 'I am going soon to cut off your doll's leg,' said the surgeon, laughingly, when he had finished the operation: the poor child, who had suffered so much without complaint, at this cruel proposal melted into tears.

Having reached a certain point, the illusion in the child ceases to be voluntary; he no longer yields to it, and from that moment a sensation of fear takes possession of him. Beginning to doubt whether it be illusion, he believes himself on the borders of an unknown world, full of frightful realities. Make a large doll dance before a child of two years old, and his pleasure will be proportioned to the gentleness of its motions; if you jump it high, and its arms move with violence, the child will perhaps laugh heartily, but he will press closely to its mother, and his flushed or pallid face will betray mental agitation. Those who possess a talent for grimace, amuse themselves with the great effect which it produces on children; but it is easy to see that the pleasure of the latter is only pure, when they recognize at intervals the natural physiognomy of the actor: if he continue his grimaces without interruption, and especially if he allows one to remain fixed upon his countenance, the child is afraid. The idea of a metamorphosis, of a frightful combination of two beings into one, takes possession of him; he hardly knows what it is he fears—but he trembles.

The effect of entire ignorance is one of the things we are most liable to forget. What we have already seen appears natural to us, and we do not feel that to the child, who has seen nothing, every thing is equally natural. The region of the possible is unlimited to him. Darkness may conceal monsters and precipices, artificial figures may become animate, fall upon him and devour him, phantoms may come out of the earth, and the chimney is a cavern where fantastic beings make their abode. As soon as an idea is presented to children their imagination

gives it a living, real form, and a vague sensation of fear calls up spectres to their mind.

Such liveliness in the faculty of imagination, joined to great excitability and to weakness of nerves, in these poor little creatures, renders it truly criminal to abuse their credulity. We may make them foolish, imbecile, subject to terrors, that will cause unhappiness through their whole lives. But even where this should not be the case, the influence of fear upon the moral character is immense. It renders it weak, hypocritical, sometimes perfidious; and moreover it exposes the child to run into destruction, in the least real danger. Why must we needs repeat it again? Rousseau, Miss Hamilton, M. Friedlander, each in their way, have exhausted the powers of eloquence, of reason, and even of science. Shall we never be able to accomplish any thing upon this inexhaustible subject of education, which will be treated of to the end of the world, but be obliged to repeat the same things forever? *

Happily, this imagination which is so lively, is not creative. Children left to themselves may be afraid of real objects, such as negroes, chimney-sweepers, masks, and may afterwards recur to the remembrance of them with terror; but they forge few chimeras. It is very seldom that an idea pre-occupies their minds without it has been suggested. We may then readily go back to the source of their fears; but the evil once introduced, is not so easy to be remedied.

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* It pains me to think that it will be so; and that the pitiable and ridiculous invention of "M. Croquemitaine" has brought back the reign of ogres and bloody giants. Many believe that a ludicrous name prevents the danger; but the example cited by a French journal, (the Constitutional,) of an unfortunate little being, who died of fright by the employment of this bugbear, proves such a belief to be a false one.

To succeed in it, it is first necessary to be well acquainted with human nature. The evil generally consists in the apparition of a phantom, whose aspect terrifies these poor children; and consequently the essential point is not to call up this phantom in their memories. Upon this subject reasonings are always thrown away. While you are discoursing upon the small probability of danger, upon the miseries of fear, and the glory attached to courage, you may be certain that your child has the vision before his eyes, and that the more you speak of it, the more you will give it consistence. Experience has proved that it is useless at any age, directly to combat the chimeras of imagination. To leave the predominant thought to be forgotten, to expel the sensation by a stronger one, to divert, interest and cultivate the moral and physical nature, is in general the best regimen against fear. A more direct remedy for an especial cure of it, is to substitute the presence of the formidable object for the idea in the child's mind. We do not imagine what we see, and the reality, even though it be disagreeable and repulsive, produces a tranquillizing effect upon the senses. This expedient, when it is possible to practise it, is very efficacious, but should be exercised with judgment.

Indeed, all new terror, all agitation communicated to the nerves, will indefinitely retard the cure, and a little must be risked for this effect. Rousseau recommends plays of night; but I will venture to say that those in which the child forgets fear, is far better than those in which he braves it. We must not trust to his loud and vociferous laughter; for it often appertains to feigned gaiety, to the desire of turning away his attention from the thought which haunts him; and it is not pleasure that will leave the deepest impression upon his memory. In this way imitations of the cries of ferocious beasts, and sudden surprises in the dark, are attended with some

danger. The child, fond of excitement, may earnestly desire the repetition of scenes or stories which are a little frightful: this taste should be satisfied, but with great discretion. It is difficult to discover whether we keep up the habit of fear, or form that of courage.

A peculiarity of the infantine imagination is, that it only concerns itself about the present time: in this respect it is very different from ours, which is always glancing, either before or behind; reviving the past, or anticipating the future. The child does not interest himself in his sensations of the preceding day. An accident which has occurred through his fault, is like any other with which he has had no concern. Every morning he wakes with a feeling of innocence, and believes himself justified for all his faults, as soon as he has said, 'It was yesterday.'

Nevertheless, when the future is at the same time both near and agreeable, the child thinks of it very willingly. We may observe him accurately counting the days which separate him from some festival, and see also that positive promises have great influence over him. It is not so with threats. He does not believe in the approach of any thing unwelcome, or else he banishes the idea by saying, 'It will be a long time first.' In his natural and healthy state, then, he experiences hope, but is a stranger to fear; so careful has Heaven been to secure his happiness.

When we think of the lively pleasures which are so easily procured to this age,—the happy period belonging only to infancy, and in which our love can so easily dispose every thing in its favor,—of the inexhaustible gaiety, of the avenues which are open on every side to joy, and shut to care and sorrow,—who can forbear the idea that the contentment of these cherished beings is a peculiar dispensation of Providence? And if, as a celebrated man has said, happiness is, at every age, the most favorable atmosphere for the germs of virtue, does it not seem that

the Supreme Governor of all has wished to secure the morality of the man by the protracted felicity of the child?

This leads us to examine the peculiar character which the dispositions we have been speaking of give to the first dawnings of conscience.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE CONSCIENCE BEFORE FOUR YEARS OLD.

"Every child is another Adam: when he has once tasted the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he is driven from the paradise of innocence."—ANONYMOUS GERMAN WRITER.

UNQUESTIONABLY, nothing appears more irregular and more versatile, than the moral sentiment at the age of three years. This sentiment, nevertheless, exists, and becomes manifest at this period, when the passions cease to have exclusive influence. The child has a vivid idea of good and evil, although he does not express it in general terms. He recognizes a law common to all, a tacit agreement which ought to be respected; and all attacks upon truth, upon the rights of property, the enjoyments of others, offences and injuries, even though he does not suffer by them personally, excite his attention. The point where he becomes interested without being impassioned, it is difficult to ascertain, and between excitement and partiality there is little room for justice.

Indeed the principles which predominate in his soul, rarely permit the child to judge with coolness. Always led away, always animated by some emotion, interested for himself or for those he loves, at times very selfish, he seems suddenly to put his own person in the place

of another; but he is not more just when he is devoted. It is well if at this time bad feelings do not get the ascendancy in his heart. We see in him, as in strong relief, the fantastic and unequal nature of our two most brilliant and most amiable faculties, imagination and sympathy.

Likewise, an emotion truly engaging, that of pity, is in him capricious. He sometimes feels it even to tears, to distress, to the entire sacrifice of what gives him most pleasure; at other times he remains inacessible to this feeling. Every thing disgusting to the child hardens his heart. When a wounded animal is pretty, we see him tenderly participate his sufferings; when he is ugly, he turns away with horror. His compassion vanishes whenever certain defects, such as deformity or absurdity, make him disdain to associate with the sufferer. Such, even at a later period of life, is the insufficiency of sympathy, that vacillating basis on which it has been vainly pretended we might found morality.

From the nature of this feeling we may understand, that all actions from which suffering does not immediately result to any individual, appear innocent to the child. He is also but little scrupulous about petty thefts, when no visible traces remain of them. There is one duty, however, that he admits without restriction, every time he conceives the idea of it, and that is obedience to the being upon whom he is dependent.

I have already said that there was one person to whom a child, endowed with sensibility, believes himself ordinarily to belong. To her he feels responsible for his conduct: his relations with others are much less intimate. He extricates himself from trouble as he can from those of less authority, but the reproaches of his true benefactor are felt to his inmost soul. She it is, who is his conscience. Her anticipated judgment absolves or

condemns him. She it is, whom he sees in imagination at the decisive moment of trial; she is often so vividly represented, that he can no longer disobey her, and by the tolerably natural effect of a strong illusion, he believes this even to be seen. Therefore the child is not astonished, when, with the air of one who knows, this person questions him about his conduct when he was far from her sight: the idea of an invisible witness has nothing repugnant in it at this age.

But if, through infirmity, or forgetfulness, the child yields to the temptation, when he returns to his benefactor remorse enters his heart. He would be able to see without emotion the proprietor of the fruits or flowers that he has taken; but his forehead reddens with shame, when he comes in contact with the representative of his conscience. To her he pours out his confessions, his tender and touching explanations: it is when with her that he experiences that necessity of expiation, so natural to a guilty heart. Afterwards, when he has committed some great fault, we sometimes see him punishing himself.

If women would but attentively examine their hearts, how often would they also find in themselves a relative morality, dependent upon their affections. How often is their most delicate and sensitive conscience, but the idea of a being tenderly beloved, and a little feared; who sees them, follows them, who suffers or enjoys in every thing that occurs to them. This conscience is a very good thing; but another is, notwithstanding, very necessary.

If sympathy is not a solid foundation for morality, it is undoubtedly one of its sources during infancy. The love and respect which parents inspire, gradually become connected with the obligations they impose: their judgment, always anticipated, acquires authority of itself; and the more independent idea of duty takes possession of the

child's heart. And when he sees that the same law controls his parents, when he finds it universally observed around him, when above all he feels it to be in accordance with the intimations confusedly given him by conscience, then he daily advances more and more within the domain of moral feeling.

One obstacle to his progress in this way, is a want of the notion of time. The nullity of the past excludes regret, that of the future excludes fear; and whilst the idea of the consequences of each action, would be a good auxiliary for conscience, the child who does not distinctly see how facts influence each other, places no importance upon his determinations. His extreme volatility delivers his impressions to the wind; his recollections, upon which he never reflects, soon pass away; and if events remained in his memory, his past motives would always be forgotten. Too changeable to believe himself the same, the child of to-day, answers not to him of yesterday. He has not that consciousness of the succession of thought which gives the idea of identity and that of time, two things in a great degree dependent upon each other. One self, the unmoved spectator of the variations of another self, incessantly regulating and noting its changes, this is what constitutes our identity, and by it our morality. But in the child nothing is yet decided.

It follows from this that the sooner we form a connexion between the past and the present in his mind, the sooner we shall introduce him into a moral as well as a rational state of being. I say between the past and the present, because it is necessary to commence with these. The influence of preceding events upon those which have followed is clear, evident, and easy to prove; whilst the future, uncertain as it always is, appears still more so to the child. He sets at defiance our threatening predictions; but when we shall have shown him clearly that each day he must

suffer the consequences of the preceding, he will gradually comprehend the connecting chain.

Thus the young child delivered to the empire of early inclinations, has dawnings of morality, although not yet a moral being. The absence of reflection is manifest in all he does. Forming no general rule, and not applying the rule to himself when he is made to understand it, he does not exert his will in aid of his moral nature. As little worthy of contempt for his faults, as of esteem for his good actions, the little child may appear to us more or less interesting, having, like animals a nature which attaches or repulses us; but we cannot, without doing violence to reason, believe that the responsibility for his conduct rests with him, as much as with us, or consider him as culpable for his faults.

Such is the state of the soul in infancy. But when after having passed through various gradations, the infant shall arrive at manhood, what will be his condition in a moral point of view? The ideas that we form of human nature have so much influence upon education, that it is essential to have some fixed opinions on this subject, which is one of debate even at the present day.

The most sacred authority of all, the Holy Scriptures, has pronounced the heart of man to be corrupt. This sentence has appeared hard, even revolting; and as it seemed that a truth relating to our nature must manifest itself in a thousand ways in human life, we believe that the impartial scrutiny of acknowledged facts, and the consequences which flow from them, have tended to confirm this severe declaration. We ask, then, if experience has shown that man was always guilty? and in case he was, does it follow that his heart must be corrupt?

Who can doubt that man is sinful? Who can have his sense of right so blunted as not to condemn himself? What do we find in our minds? A profound conviction

of the freedom of our determinations, and a knowledge, sufficiently clear, of the course which duty points out to us. What do we see in our conduct? Constant deviations from the good path which we are able to pursue. Responsible, because we are free; incapable of rendering a satisfactory account of our actions, or even of our intentions; we find our sentence written in the law which we acknowledge to be just. The best thing in us, the correct idea which we have of virtue, condemns us; and we cannot justify, without degrading ourselves.

By challenging the tribunal of that loose morality which judges of actions by the general standard of social life; by seeing righteousness where it alone is, in God himself, sin and its frightful extent meets our view on every side. This belief of it, (and it is the only true one,) we find in all religious creeds. Man, by transgressing the law, has always believed he offended the Law-giver who imposed it; he has always sought to appease a justly offended deity; he is always compared to an insolvent debtor; and this idea, consecrated in many modes of worship, has received in that of Christians the most august of sanctions.

But what is the source of that evil which we cannot but acknowledge in our actions? Is it inherent in our nature, or must we affirm, with some modern philosophers, that all our inclinations, innocent in themselves, become bad only by the use we make of them; and when misled a moment, we find a pleasure in rectifying them which surpasses the regret of having transgressed? Sin would then become a simple accident, an effect of inattention, or of weakness; and it would not be found rooted in the recesses of our hearts.

This system has obtained numerous partisans in the present age; but is the supposition on which it is founded just, and does not the practical observation of the human heart give it the lie continually? Has he, who maintains

that our natural inclinations are of themselves innocent, and susceptible of being rightly directed, made a complete enumeration of them? has he searched into the nature of each? What does he make of envy in this doctrine? Does he forget that it is impossible to direct this vile disposition towards good? And I speak not of the emotion, perhaps excusable, which makes us feel more keenly the privation of an advantage which we see another possess; I speak of the desire which this other indulges; and the happiness which he acquires by it is counterbalanced by some trouble in its attainment. Is there not also a mingling of malicious feeling in anger, and in all those passionate and perverse propensities which cause us pleasure in the miseries of others? That an element of virtuous indignation, of justice, and whatever we imagine of good, may enter into such dispositions, I admit; but how can we avoid seeing the pernicious principle which takes pleasure, and even delight in making our neighbor's suffer? a propensity very different from that which it becomes us to defend. Malignity, as its name indicates, too much resembles an active principle of evil, not to vitiate the best mixture, in whatever proportion it may be found in it. And let us not say that perverse inclinations are necessary, that they make a part of the general order. By suppressing envy and hatred, the course of the world would be much more peaceful. Anger perplexes and blinds, more than it serves us. Even in the case of an unforeseen attack, the best safeguard would be coolness. That increase of energy which we think is owing to excitement, is furnished by the simple view of danger, and in order to save a house from the flames, one will make as vigorous efforts as to deliver himself from an enemy. Is there not, if I may so speak, a luxury in sin, which, like a foreign poison, communicates itself to our nature?

If the meaning of the terms attached to good and evil,

were submitted to a metaphysical analysis, it is unquestionably possible that we might be reduced to define evil by negative expressions, and to say that it is disorder opposed to order, or, in short, the contrary to good. But this discussion would be without object as applicable to the domain of moral feeling, where these terms answer to the ideas so universally received, that we cannot attempt to change the acceptation of them. Besides, even if the notion of evil were negative,* there would still be no result to draw from it in favor of the goodness of our original constitution.

In a very general point of view, a certain degree of order, and it may be of goodness, is necessary to the preservation of all mankind. Wherever this degree is not found, disorganization, decomposition, and corruption exist. An animated being, in the very fact that he lives, presents some idea of order; otherwise he would destroy himself, or would not be suffered among his kind. The most depraved men, if they are not fools, observe this law in some point: they do not commit evil in all its forms, and for this reason alone, because it is evil. But as in that degree of cold where animal life ceases, there is still warmth in the opinion of the chemist, so we may recognize the elements of goodness in that degree of corruption, where there is no longer moral life. The feeling always exists in the heart, but too feebly, and too unequally distributed; and wherever it is paralyzed, decomposition en-

* This opinion Madame Guizot has supported with infinite spirit in her 'Lettres sur l'Education domestique,' of which I have already spoken. Too rigid a moralist not to confess that man is guilty, Madame Guizot denies the existence of evil propensities; and although admitting that evil is every where, she believes the idea of it is purely negative, and consequently does not allow that there is any active principle of evil in the human soul. [Ed.]

sues, the moral being dies partially, and there is thus, the seeds of death in every soul.

What would be in this case the evil inclinations whose existence I have recognized? They would be those pernicious dispositions, which tend to extinguish in us the love of goodness, and to deprive us of that sensibility which constitutes our life. When the heart no longer possesses good emotions; when death has invaded the region where conscience dwells, the most trifling motives, the simple hope of a new emotion, is sufficient to excite to the greatest crimes. Destroy pity, and Nero will set fire to Rome, because the sight of the conflagration gives inspiration to his singing. The idea of displaying extraordinary power, of finding a kind of intoxicating enjoyment, in those acts which are interdicted to most men, is capable of inciting to frightful attempts, the unhappy wretch who has nothing to restrain him.

It imports little, then, that the idea of evil or disorder be negative, if disorder is a cause of disorganization. The absence of a necessary element is as great a calamity as the presence of a dangerous one. The tree in which the sap does not rise, the body where the blood has ceased to flow, and the soul which is not touched with the love of goodness, are equally seized with unsoundness of constitution, and ruin is the consequence. Is corruption, moral as well as physical, any thing else than the privation of the principle of life, than that death which gradually takes possession of us?

When one has once entered the domain of moral feeling, he desires above all things to find a language which corresponds to the power of conscience, and this language possesses a truth of which no argument can deprive it. We feel, very decidedly, that many actions which are conformed to rule, have no moral value. Providence has so constituted the world that order conducts to happiness,

disorder to calamity. Consequently, man is often observant of order, when he remains a stranger to the idea of duty. He is in the way of good, without willing to do good, and has no title to esteem for it. Therefore, far from finding in all that is lawfully done upon the earth, a proof of the morality of human nature, we see in it only a mark of simple good sense; and the violation of the law appears to us the effect of a strange perversity. Negative terms suffice no longer to diminish our contempt for that which is at once a vice, and a folly; we attribute a body to the evil from the reality of its principle; and our imagination furnishes strength to seize upon the enemy, with which we are forever destined to contend.

However it may be, one fact alone remains incontestible. It is, that man commits sin, knowing it to be sin; that the law is written in our hearts, and that unlawful dispositions incline us to transgress it. Some of these, such as malignity and envy, by their very nature oppose our obedience to the law: others oppose no obstacle to it, excepting accidentally; but whatever they may be, we often yield to them, at the same time acknowledging that they are not irresistible. This no reasoning can conceal, and the most scrupulous man feels it the most sensibly. Little faults in his eyes, are of the same nature as great ones, and differ from them only in degree. When he has once been vanquished in the conflict, he can no longer tell where there will be an end to defeat; he feels himself to be on slippery ground, where he is insecure, and he calls with loud cries for a hand to support him. He wants assistance to combat the propensities which are ready to mislead him, to give him the hope of seeing their strength diminish; and above all, he wants peace restored to his troubled conscience.

But to return to the observation of children. Do we find in studying them, that there is any evil propensity

inevitably attached to their moral constitution? If we except a general disposition to egotism, which is blended from birth with selfishness, (a necessary feeling, but existing in the extreme,) we cannot discover any that is universal in them. As they are not obliged to commit faults, but nevertheless do commit them incessantly, so no vicious inclination necessarily predominates in them, but as the germ exists in the heart, there is always some one manifest. It is easy to distinguish a threatening side in every character, but our care has the power of balancing or weakening dangerous propensities, before they result in habits.

The most essential thing in education, after the culture of good feelings, which I believe I have sufficiently recommended, is to prevent the progress of evil inclinations, that they may not become established by repeated indulgence, and give birth to defects that will be difficult to correct. It is consequently useless to form beforehand, the idea of the inclinations we are called to repress, and in the number there is one which is doubtless too slight to be called an inclination, but frequent and fatal enough to justify me in the mention of it.

I speak of that momentary depravation of the will, which finds a pleasure, a peculiar relish in the idea of violating rules. This movement, whether we would attribute it to the action of bad principle, or would see in it a false direction of the instinct of independence, has been so often remarked in the human race, that it has been designated by the proverbial expression of a 'taste for forbidden fruit.' We observe indeed in children something besides weakness, besides the inability of submitting to sacrifices exacted by duty, we see them rejoice to shake off the yoke of obedience. A revolt against all rule, against even that law of right which is engraved in their inmost heart, is not an unnatural movement with them.

There is a time when the child, and alas! man also, is seized with a savage intoxication, a time when desires long subjected, resume their empire; it is the revelling of evil inclinations. At this time outrage, violence, the suffering or humiliation of others, disorder, and in a word, sin, seems to delight the soul, and become its element. Reason, and especially religion, may prevent the return of this rebellious state; but it is one in which children will sometimes fall even with the greatest care. A little girl, of whom I have already spoken, a child who was sweet and gentle, and appeared generally to take delight in obedience, seemed sometimes to pride herself in openly refusing it. At eighteen months she manifested the double desire of observing rules, and defying them. Remaining alone with her mother, who was confined to the bed by illness, she one day, without the least apparent motive, burst forth into open rebellion. Dresses, hats, screens, working materials, all that she could lay her hands upon, were thrown on the floor in the middle of the chamber; she sung and danced around the pile with great joy, nor could the remonstrances of her mother produce any effect upon her. She seemed possessed with the desire of evil: her blushes betrayed the reproaches of conscience, but her pleasure consisted in stifling its voice.

It is the same also with that love of cruelty which little boys sometimes show in their sports, after they have passed the age of early infancy. When they make an animal suffer, they doubtless have a motive of curiosity; they wish to see how the poor creature will behave, while they torment it; but the point, the excellency of the diversion is to have the emotion which they experience, to harden themselves against pity, and have the boldness to be cruel.

I feel true regret in writing these things, and I wound my own heart in accusing that of children. How can we avoid loving them tenderly? How can we help being

beguiled and captivated by their charms? These poor children sin continually in intention, but this intention is not accomplished. When they wish to dissemble, they do not deceive; when they would hurt us, they have not the power: we take their simplicity for candor, and their weakness for innocence. And then they are so changeable — a token of sensibility, of sincerity, of confidence, succeeds so quickly to a period of falsehood or selfishness, that we forget all, but that which renders them more dear to us. But shall we love them less, shall they have less a claim to our profoundest pity, when we feel that they possess the same sinful nature that we do? when we know that like us, they bear in their bosoms enemies against which we ought unceasingly to arm them? I see them, like all the rest of human kind, doing evil often when they know it not, and doing it also when they are conscious of it.

Is it said this doctrine is dangerous, — that by professing it we prepare too many excuses for weakness in temptation? It is important to know if, by not professing it, we prepare them with sufficient defence in trial. There is nothing dangerous but error. It is useless to hope that we may form morality with other elements than those of human nature; it is emphatically so to suppose that if the work could be executed, it would be susceptible of being preserved. If we are not assured beforehand of the solidity of the ground on which we have built, if the edifice has been constructed upon the deceitful foundation of natural purity, 'when the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat against that house it will fall, and the ruin of it will be great.'

I shall expose the moral consequences of this doctrine, which is, I think, very favorable to the development of conscience, when I speak of the age at which it may be comprehended by children. It is sufficient to say here, that

the decision pronounced in the Gospel on the human heart, connected as it is, with the whole Christian doctrine, has the primary advantage of imparting mildness to education. Parents, convinced of the inherent vice of our nature, in discovering the faults of their children, do not experience that surprise and deep indignation which inclines them to severity; they are ready to contend in season with the propensities they have anticipated, and they do not sleep in a deceitful security. The children, in turn, more easily convinced of their faults, do not oppose to the reprimands of their parents such revolt, such obstinate pride, and avowals, so often false, of pure intentions; faults which only aggravate those already committed. More docile than others, and more easily led to repentance after their transgressions, there is less prospect of their committing new ones; and this without their seeking a vain justification in the evil of their nature. They felt themselves free, before they acted; and the persuasion that they had power to abstain from the evil which seduced them, is too just and strong to be shaken.

But in order that children may resist the greatest possible temptations, and feel true regret when they have yield- to them, it is necessary to know how to inspire them with the religious feelings of which their age is susceptible. This subject remains to be treated of.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ADVANTAGES OF AN EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS FEELING.

"Atheism is not an opinion; it is no longer the negation of an opinion; it is a blindness; it is a deadness of the moral organ."
J. P. RICHTER.

THUS far I have reasoned much, have recommended scrutiny, and invoked experience; perhaps I shall not be accused of a blind enthusiasm, if I now speak of religion. I have wished to come to this subject, and notwithstanding, now that I have fulfilled my intention by first describing infancy, a sort of fear, although I know not why, restrains me; the grandeur of the subject astonishes and suspends my faculties; and I remember only the weakness of the age I have to do with. How shall I express my desire, how advise to present to the limited intelligence of a child of three or four years, the object which surpasses all intelligence, which could not be embraced by our mind in its most perfect development?

Nevertheless, I will say, that in the contemplation of such an object, all idea of common proportion vanishes, all appears placed upon the same level. To comprehend God! who can do it but God himself? Men, angels, children, — we can only prostrate ourselves before him. To

adore and bless him, to obey his holy law, to submit to his immutable decrees, to have a glimpse of his perfections without seeing them in all their lustre, such ought to be our employment in time and eternity.

The child is in many respects happily qualified to fulfil this universal vocation. Less fettered than we are by rooted habits, his ties with the earth less binding, he can believe what he does not see, and love what he does not intimately know. Grave and solemn impressions are sometimes painted in his looks, but as yet he wants language to express them. His face has given the idea of that of angels: radiant, celestial, touching, it has been used as an emblem of the adoration of pure spirits. His whole language is a prayer: feeling more than we do his own weakness, he also knows better his need of assistance, and he possesses much more the spirit of filial tenderness. What does he then want in order to approach his God? Religion sleeps in his bosom, if I may so say; it is less necessary to inspire, than to awaken it.

The soul is naturally religious; this fact which is conspicuously shown in the annals of the human race, may be made manifest in the tenderest infancy; but education ought to place it in the strongest light, and this is its most important task.

This task ought undoubtedly to be fulfilled. We could not exempt the child from the laws imposed by humanity, when even the question is to communicate to him the best of all privileges. Our most natural feeling only becomes manifest, when the exciting cause is present; otherwise it is only a vague desire, a want unsatisfied. Even in this ambiguous state, a propensity may exhibit signs of existence, although it does not possess the means of gratification. He who experiences it, is tormented with a certain uneasiness, and it impedes the harmonious development of his faculties. The soul which does not exert all its

powers suffers a partial decay, without knowing what is wanting to its vigor. A young cygnet raised far from the water, although having no distinct idea of its native element, would languish; restless, agitated, or drooping at intervals, his despondency, emaciation, and the yellow tint of his plumage would sufficiently indicate that his destination was not accomplished. At the sight of a stagnant pool, he would plunge into it, and this noble bird, wallowing in filth, would appear but a degenerate thing, the refuse and shame of creation. But give him the living stream; let the pure waters of some noble river restore his vigor, and you will see the cygnet in its beauty. In a few days his brilliant whiteness, the grace, majesty and rapidity of his motions, will show you what his nature is, and what element was wanting to its development.

Such is our soul: it can live without adoring God, but it is languishing and withered; or it can change its desires and plunge in superstition. Such we see it upon the borders of the Ganges; but on the shores of the Atlantic, where a new world has risen up, we learn how religion elevates the soul.

To develope the noblest instinct of humanity, by giving it a right direction; to bestow upon the young child such an amount of religious instruction as is meet for him, proportioning it to his mental progress—this is our duty; and cares, in themselves so sweet, will also be rewarded with success. But the longer we delay, this success, otherwise infallible, will become uncertain, or difficult to secure.

It seems that sometimes a sort of reverence for holy things, deters parents from presenting the idea to their children, before they have attained the age of reason. Such a scruple would be excusable; but why are those who feel it exempt from the same, when other objects are in question, which they also reverence? Do they raise a

similar doubt, when the desire is to excite some other feeling which is necessary, or only laudable? Have you waited in order to render dear and sacred to your son the name of father, until he rightly knows what constitutes paternity? Have you never pronounced to him with love, the name of his country, before he could form the idea of his relationship as a citizen? You wish not to allow your child the liberty of being ungrateful towards his country, and you involuntarily conduct him to the possibility of being ungrateful to his God.

There are in a religious education two different designs, which it is important to distinguish; that of inspiring the child with pious sentiments, and that of teaching him how to answer those who would deprive him of such sentiments, by denying the reality of their object. These two designs should unquestionably be attempted; but if you wait for the favorable moment to press the one, you will lose that of succeeding in the other. There is no want of tenderness in attempting both at once; the child is not an unbeliever who is to be convinced. It is useless to force arguments upon him; if you follow this course before the proper time, you will give him a false science, or rather a science, which, although true, is not true with respect to him, since he is not in a state to appreciate the solidity of the principles upon which it is based. It will be thus, until the age when it will cease to be easy to direct his sentiments.

There is, I admit, a difficulty opposed to us, which deranges the routine of education. Is it our object to establish truths? we would wish to lay down principles, and regularly to deduct consequences from them. Is the question to communicate feelings? we would desire to give an exact idea of the object to which they ought to be applied, in order to teach children to place their affections only where they know the cause. If we had presided at

the formation of moral being, we might have arranged things different. We might have had reason spring forth first, and then nothing would have been cultivated in the soul but under her auspices. Heaven has not decided thus. The child already loves, what he has not judged of; the development of his faculties is not conformed to logical order, neither the way in which ideas enter his head; and the manner in which he connects them is not like ours. This is sad; but what can we do? Shall we suffer the best gifts to be lost, out of respect to our own method? This is the fault, that they who maintain this sentiment too often commit. To ask if religion is necessary for the child, is to call in question its necessity for man.

I say more: there is so little necessity of waiting for the age of reason in order to teach your child piety, that even if it had attained that age, you ought not, as I think, to commence the instruction with argument. Presented as facts, and announced with truth and simplicity, the fundamental truths of religion may be confided to their own strength, and of themselves produce conviction. To introduce these great subjects by discussion, by proofs; to suppose objections for the sake of refuting them, is to give an inauspicious direction to thought, which injures the development of the genuine religious sense; a direction which is too often implanted, which is difficult to change, and which tends to make an exercise of the mind, of what ought to be a worship of the soul.

Was it then only the better to avoid an evil, religious education ought to precede the age of reason. But let us not mistake: I do not fear at all that the strongest and most enlightened argument can shake the foundation of such an education. With respect to this, even the progress of light reassures us; since, independently of the revival of the religious spirit in the present age, the most

elevated flights of philosophy have put unbelief to the blush. Be assured, you will one day obtain the assent of reason, but be careful that it may have something to confirm it; and think that the religion which resides only in the head, is useless for the guidance as well as the happiness of man.

What is the true object of a religious education? It is to teach the young soul to communicate with God, since the consciousness of such a communication, whatever abuse it may have suffered from enthusiasm, is nevertheless the very essence of religion. Without the persuasion that our cry is heard; without the hope that at least a tacit answer is obtained, that blessings are poured upon us in return for the offering of prayer, there is nothing consoling, nothing regenerating in worship; it is no longer worship, and the lonely spirit soon ceases to present a useless homage.

In order to establish this intimate and sacred intercourse, in order to produce the feeling of such a correspondence, the path opened to us in the Gospel is the only known, the only sure, and, in short, the only one in which we could find assistance. Jesus Christ the Mediator, Intercessor, and Redeemer, removes in many ways the obstacles which human nature opposes to the progress of religion in our souls. Placing himself in the immense interval which separates finite beings from Infinity, the unhappy from the source of happiness, sinners from eternal holiness, he reconciles our hearts to God, he places Him within our reach, and within that of the humblest among us. This innumerable multitude, condemned to remain strangers to the language of cultivated minds, hear another language; the ignorant are called, childhood is called, and all that belong to the human race. Wherever we find dispositions which are so peculiar to the child, as love, confidence, and submission, we see Jesus Christ offer to guide them. In saying 'Suffer little children to

come unto me,' he seems to have revealed our duty as parents, and the general spirit of his worship.

Religion, undoubtedly, could not all at once be comprehended by the mind of the child; the august assemblage of the truths which compose it, or which rally around it, are not displayed to his feeble eyes; but all that is most lovely and consoling in piety, all that supports, animates, and inflames our souls, and can still re-kindle them upon the chilling borders of the tomb; all this, I say, may be experienced by the child, before he can be taught to reason about them.

Since the distinctive character of Christianity, and the means of instruction furnished by sacred books, permit us to inspire our children with the love of God, how can we avoid making use of such a privilege! how help foreseeing that this feeling, early conceived, will take deep root in the heart! If religion has a date, if the period of its birth is not lost in the weakness of infancy, if there are remembrances which have preceded it, it is not the inseparable companion of existence. Of all the ideas connected with it, that which is most likely to purify the inmost recesses of the heart, the persuasion of the presence of God, has not at once the continuity of a habit, and the depth of an unceasingly renewed impression. Perhaps at a later age we might succeed in introducing it through fear; but then it would assume an inauspicious character. It is at the era when all nature smiles upon us, when all our species love and protect us, that the idea of a God who befriends and watches over us, easily takes possession of our souls. And how full of blessing is this one idea! who can appreciate its benefits, who know the inexhaustible fund of hope which is comprised in it! It shows us a bright world beyond our own, a celestial perfection far exceeding the greatest of this human nature, a happiness more abounding and more pure than we can form any

idea of here below; and, in short, it persuades us that even affliction is sent for our good. 'Although he slay me,' says Job, 'I will still trust in him.' In the deepest solitude, in exile, in old age, in death, God is with us; he supports, he hears, he speaks to us, he re-assures us: and if the danger is great, imminent, inevitable, if the shadows of death surround us, it is because he would receive us to his bosom. A mild and rainbow radiance is shed upon every object, an atmosphere of love envelopes all nature; men, animals, even the material creation — plants, rivers, and mountains, all are loved; all are the works of God; all speak a language which serves to tell us He is our Father; and the peace and happiness which he sheds abroad in the soul, repeats it with a stronger emphasis.

What other time than that of happy infancy, would we choose for the communication of such impressions? What other time to make a pleasure, of what will always be a duty? In order that religion may be fully enjoyed, life must be in its flower, it must be clothed in all its beauty. When this beauty shall fade, when the brightness which environed this terrestrial world shall have disappeared; then the heavens, as in the night, will doubtless appear sparkling with light, but it will be dark around us. It is to the youth alone that the sun shines in its brightest splendor; he alone is permitted to glorify God by lofty deeds; upon him is lavishly poured the full treasury of holy feelings — feelings whose blissful remembrance presents the antepast of eternal felicity, at that advanced age, when he is no longer able to devise means for his own happiness.

To pretend to supply, by a bold stroke, or a theatrical scene, as Rousseau says, the power of long remembrances and of early habits, is to know but little of the human heart. A thousand unforeseen circumstances may cause the scene to fail; and should it succeed, it would never

produce more than a slight impression. Soon life would return to its former course, and religious ideas be dissipated; while on the contrary, the course of life would restore them, when we had been careful to associate them with all the remembrances of youth. Moreover, we should never be able thus to introduce Christianity, and the consequence would be the possession of a religion destitute of influence.

Religion ought to be a motive; from this point we should never depart. When we thus consider it, we see that it is essential to prevent the formation of other motives, which act in a contrary way; it furthermore, has power to make those subordinate, which usually act in the same great line. Thus the fear of blame, or the love of praise, important interests, the desire of being useful, and all virtuous feelings which most frequently second religious acts, ought to grow under its shade. Cultivated, as accessory motives, they are good and useful; and occupy an important place in the varied occurrences of time; but each one carries within itself a secret poison, which is not slowly manifested when its influence is not balanced, or opposed.

These ideas are so grand and fruitful, that I feel my impotence to express them. I cannot readily point out what the eternal existence of an angel would hardly suffice to develope. I must of necessity then be brief, but will finish, by a consideration of another kind, presented to another class of readers.

I have spoken until now to parents, who think they have not religion enough in their families; it remains to address those who are doubtful whether they have not too much, although this last feeling, as I believe, refers to it in a very mistaken point of view. Religion is the love of God expressed by obedience to his will. And as the will of God, such as he has engraven it on our hearts,

and more expressly announced it in the Gospel, is, that we might accomplish our whole duty; we can no more love God too much, than we can love goodness, of which he is the eternal source, too much. Christian morality, is the best morality; there is no habitual deviation from the most severe virtue, or the most scrupulous delicacy, which does not suppose a correspondent change in the spirit of Christianity; the law is always with it to condemn transgressors, and to show that they have violated its principles.

If we faithfully examine the faults, of which men are accused, who display a high standard of Christianity, we shall see that these faults are due to the necessarily incomplete action of the regenerating principle, in the midst of a corrupt world; to the state of conflict connected with such a principle in society, in families, and even in the bosom of individuals. What is proved by the inconsistencies, which are so much censured, in certain persons, who think themselves holy, if it is not the excellence of a doctrine, whose purity contrasts with the weakness of the human heart, and gives an odious coloring to its vices? What is proved by the hypocrisy, of which false devotees are guilty, if it is not that the reality of the Christian virtues is so far seen, that it is thought to be an advantage to assume the garb of piety? What is proved, in short, by fanaticism, notwithstanding the fear which this word justly excites; what is proved by it, if it is not that there is such a beauty, such a grandeur in religious perceptions, and they are attended by so much happiness, that they may become a passion, in despite of their immaterial nature? Let us repress every disorderly movement, however noble may be its origin; but in order to prevent this kind of excess, as well as every other, a religious education early commenced, and judiciously conducted, is the most effectual means.

When a feeling very general in our species, is at the same time so natural that we cannot exhaust its source, the only means to prevent it from gaining the ascendancy, is ourselves to direct the course of it. How would you keep your son from the influence of religion? Its worship is not only celebrated in temples, but the human race is so constituted that a voice of prayer is heard on every side. Poetry, the arts, and even the theatre, represent the image of heavenly things, although sometimes robbed of their beauty. In all places on the earth, oppressed weakness turns to God, persecuted innocence calls upon him, grief invokes him with its tears. Where will you take your child that these pervading feelings may never reach his heart? The strongest impressions are caused by certain random-strokes, which unexpectedly fasten upon the soul. You therefore deliver a powerful resource to the mercy of events and men, by neglecting to possess yourself of it in season.

We may ask enthusiasts in every kind of worship, where they make their most zealous proselytes? Is it in pious and well-regulated families, where Christian habits are contracted from the cradle? Undoubtedly not; it is among those abandoned beings who have long remained strangers to religion. Whether the aberrations of passion, or an education altogether worldly, has turned the thoughts of man from the great interests of eternity, when once these interests are presented to him, when he fully considers the destiny of the immortal soul, no one can answer for the course his imagination will take. To reserve for the most dangerous age, the novelty of perceptions always striking, and sometimes terrible, is to risk a revolution too potent for human weakness. A sudden conversion is, I admit, often a happy, and sometimes a necessary crisis, but it is one which might be spared by a pious education.

This last reflection has not escaped the observation of all authors. There, are some, possessing very little devotion, who have advised, I am sorry to say, a sort of inoculation of religious feeling, to the end that they might early deaden its activity. There is some truth in the observation upon which such advice is founded, but the object will not succeed; when, in order to be more secure of it, they confine themselves to the teaching of a sterile doctrine — of a Christianity purely nominal. If vital religion is not pre-eminent in the soul, we shall encounter danger, when our object was to avoid it. It is necessary that an impulse be given, before it can be directed: nothing can accomplish nothing. A religion that comes not from the heart is not religion, and it produces happy effects no farther than it deters from fatal ones.

Whether you desire, then, to preserve your child from the wildness of fanaticism, or the desolate sterility of an existence without hope, there is but one course to follow; inspire him with the mild sentiments of piety. Religion, which pervades the heart of infancy, takes the happy tint of that age, and is connected with its innocent enjoyments. United to all its pleasures, she has nothing sad; and to its studies, she has nothing rigid. Intellectual and religious culture constrained to take the lead, follow a common direction, and transmit a character of reason and sanctity. The whole work of education is thereby facilitated. That which is most familiar to the soul, religious feeling, adds to the warmth of the natural affections. Religion has scarcely commenced its reign in the heart, than already, faithful to its charming name, it binds fast.* The chain which connects man with God, unites us also to our children. A feeling of decided respect subjects them

* It is well known that the word religion comes from *religio* — to tie hard, to bind fast. [Ed.]

to our authority, and even softens the impression of our discipline, by persuading them that it is not optional with us, and that a necessary severity is the effect of our obedience to the common law. We are the representatives of the Supreme Being, whom we adore with them; and from the sublime idea of a Heavenly Father, a sacredness descends upon the earthly parents, which human imperfection cannot destroy.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN. FIRST PERCEPTIONS.

"To accustom children to read the Bible, is to teach them to keep habitually within reach of the means designed by God himself for our sanctification." — MRS. MORE.

FOR a child to believe in God, is almost to adore him. Faith and religious worship are intimately connected, since the idea of the Creator once conceived and understood, could not fail to excite in the soul sentiments of gratitude and love. As these two subjects may be separately considered, however, we will first ask in what way we should make the child acquainted with God. We may follow the same which God himself has made use of, to become manifest to the human race, by relating to the young pupil the events which have accompanied the successive revelations of him.

'Religion,' says Fenelon, 'is altogether historic; it is by a tissue of marvellous facts, that we find its establishment, its perpetuity, and all which ought to incline us to believe and practise it.' These words give the key to religious instruction. History furnishes the thread which connects eternal truths together, whether of morality or faith: she offers to the mother the means of unfolding them, and

procures so much pleasure to the child, as disposes him to admit them.

It is true, that an understanding of the facts made known in the Bible, seems already to suppose some perceptions of a very elevated nature; such as the existence of God, of his principal attributes, and of the immateriality of the soul: we may, nevertheless, relate to the child many parts of the Sacred History, before he is even in a state clearly to conceive these grand ideas. We are not aware how much we often forestall instruction by frequent illustrations. The definition of a word is often more difficult for the child to comprehend, than to arrive at its meaning in some other way. A mist which is gradually dissipated, is the image of what passes in his mind, as soon as he is introduced into a new region; and as the words we make use of are explained only by other words, which themselves need explanation, we feel that it is often necessary to depend upon the instinct of divination, in order, one after another, to elucidate vague perceptions.

We ought, nevertheless, to facilitate as much as possible, the work of this instinct. In relating to the child the history of the creation, of the terrestrial paradise, or any thing connected with them, you may pause upon the name of God, and without frightening him by questions too direct, sound him sufficiently to know what he understands by this name. The interrogatory method employed with address, searches out truth — almost invents it: the child animated by the pleasure of discovery, appropriates what has been really suggested to him, and preserves as his own good idea what he has been obliged to admit. This method of ancient date, is now very much employed, and is one of the best means to make use of, for the instruction of childhood.

As every body, however, does not know how to exercise it, and as timid or very backward children, may be ren-

dered unhappy by the necessity of replying, we ought not to attach too much importance to this means. The simple exposition of a truth, as soon as there is an opportunity for expressing it, will succeed equally well, however little we may possess the art of awakening curiosity. The object is to interest the child. In childhood, knowledge is so imperfect, that it derives its greatest value from a remembrance of the pleasure attached to its acquisition; since it will be from these remembrances that the pupil will at some future day endeavor to extend it. With regard to religion, above all, it is to be feared that impressions of constraint and weariness would be indefinitely prolonged during life.

I am decided against the employment of proofs; and I would banish them, if for this reason alone, that they wound feeling, when it exists, and retard its formation, if it exists not. But I would yet have another motive. All proof supposes a doubt, and often possesses a power to call it into being, which fails to dissipate it. If the truth that we wished to establish, was evident, we undoubtedly should not take the trouble to demonstrate it; it is, then, necessary to give prominence to the contrary proposition, in order to justify the employment of demonstration. Hence two things are to be taught — error, that it may be refuted; and truth, that it may be engraven on the mind: but the first is at least useless, and leaves often but too many traces. When we wish to prove the existence of God, for example, we say that the admirable order of the world cannot be attributed to chance; and thereby we give reality and consistence to a chimerical being, named chance. We must needs create something, in order to say there is nothing; but, as I have already remarked, the imagination of children is of that nature, that it is easy to call up phantoms in their mind, but not so easy to dispel them.

What method do you take to communicate all other kinds of knowledge to your child? You tell him that the earth is round, long before it is possible to demonstrate the fact to him. You give him the history of past ages as truth, without discussing the validity of the historian's testimony: you affirm facts, simply as facts, and reserve the examination of them for a future period. Why would you pursue a different course in relation to religion? In appearing to submit to the scrutiny of the child, questions decidedly above his reach, you deceive him upon the extent of his faculties: you impose upon his judgment still more, by inciting him to draw conclusions without sufficient knowledge; thus manifesting your belief that he is equal to the task. Whatever you do, he will believe you. His faith, which it is your object to enlighten, remains blind, and it consists of nothing but faith in you. Since your persuasion alone influences the child, why that display of reasoning, of which he so little appreciates the justice; why not simply affirm truths which the highest philosophy admits?

Nevertheless, without giving proof upon proof, we may transmit to the soul of the child that faith which feels the impossibility of doubting, and which is the most common of all. To show him, on every hand, the effects of God's power, is to convince him that there is a God. The idea of a cause is so engrafted in our nature, that wherever the power of man ceases, children seize with avidity the idea of a Creator. The existence of an object, of a phenomenon, of the action whatever it may be, appears to them the performance of an intelligent will; they see nothing but life, or the effects of it, throughout the world. Then, when the impossibility of tracing it to a human cause is demonstrated to them, they admit a super-human agent. They will ask you what this agent is, but will not question its existence. The question of the existence of God, then, needs not to be brought forward; it is sufficient to speak of his attributes.

A knowledge of the attributes of God, as they are displayed in creation, in the heart of man, and in his history, constitutes the eternal object of education, and even of all science. From the child of three years old, who finds a testimony of God's goodness in the pleasure he receives from roses and strawberries, even to Newton who recognizes a sovereign intelligence in the arrangement of the universe, every mind, as well as all the faculties of mind, will find matter proportioned to its powers, in the study of the attributes of God. This study, the dimensions of which increase as knowledge advances, ought at first to be accommodated to the weakness of the child, and to be presented to him only as the explanation of interesting facts, on which we desire to fix his attention.

The moral attributes or perfections of the Creator are not to the child a subject of astonishment, however far he may be from conceiving of their grandeur; and he sees with reverence various traces of them in nature. But the incommunicable attributes of God, his eternity and immensity, confound his thoughts as well as ours. The habits of his mind render it particularly difficult to conceive of immateriality. Accustomed vividly to represent to himself absent objects, he finds more difficulty than we do in attributing reality to a spiritual essence, and we shall better succeed in leading him to do it by seeking first to convince him of the immateriality of the soul. Children easily admit that that which loves and thinks in them, is not their body, nor any part of it: we might believe that their own confused observations agree with what we teach them in respect to this, so promptly do they admit the idea of a spiritual and internal inhabitant. The necessary result of this idea, is immortality; and the hope that the souls of those who die rest in the bosom of God, and are there re-united, appears to be as delightful to them as to us: they express it in their manner, and we see that it pre-

pares for them the most powerful consolations. The voice of conscience, which they have been taught to consider as the voice of God speaking within them, gives them the feeling of an intimate and intellectual communication between their soul and its Creator. The idea that God accompanies them wherever they go, surprises them but little; it is because, as I before said, they often imagine themselves followed by their mother's eye, when they do not see her. But they have more difficulty in conceiving the spiritual idea of the God of the universe. The material works of the Almighty appear to them to proceed from a material cause; the immense distance of places, where His power is exerted, at the same time baffles their intelligence; and from this, results moments of error, which it is necessary to remedy, without attaching too much importance to them.

It ought to be remembered, that with regard to the objects of religion, we possess two faculties of opposite effects; imagination, which is incessantly creating forms; and reason, which denies the reality of these forms. We, whose reason is more mature, and whose imagination less vivid than that of children, are but too often subject to the law which obliges us to represent, more or less materially, the various objects of worship. The vault of heaven, the walls of a temple, sometimes even, for want of another shape, the letters of a word become painted before a mind to which an image is necessary. But we know that nothing appertaining to these, constitutes God: our lips hesitate to pronounce words which good sense abjures; but our most intimate conceptions are less irreproachable than our language. Our language is not entirely so, so much do tongues, the children of the imagination, betray their origin. The purest terms which we employ to designate immaterial beings, such as spirit, essence, intelligence, have a corporeal root, and relate to some one of our sensations.

There is an invincibly terrestrial element attached to all our conceptions here below, but we are able to fancy them released from this alliance. Thought sees celestial objects through the cloud from which she cannot disengage herself, and conceives the idea of their purity, in spite of the atmosphere which surrounds them. We know that these veils will be withdrawn; that all these visions, this troublesome assemblage of forms and figures, will disappear before immutable truth. Should we, because we are but human, refrain from exalting our condition as much as possible? The expectation of another existence already ennobles us, and our language imperfectly accords with the hymns of angels, if it offers the sincere expression of a sacrifice of love.

We ought, then, to be extremely indulgent towards the child, for faults from which our greatest circumspection is not able entirely to preserve us. When a sally of youth escapes him, the natural effect of a lively and whimsical imagination, we ought gently to correct it, without offence, and without laughter, and, above all, without believing that our labor will be lost, because we see some marks of levity. Feeling makes its way across the inconstancy of infantine attention. Falling water gradually wears the rock; but how many drops appear lost!

One of the greatest advantages of the historical instruction of religion, is to satisfy the desire for representations and figures, without giving place to superstition, at least when we adhere to the testimony of the sacred authors. Another advantage is, that it will for a long time supply the place of dogmatic or theological instruction. The declaration of the principal articles of faith, is implicitly contained in the narrations of the two Testaments, and under this simple and speaking form, the most important truths find an access to the young mind, that it would be otherwise difficult to give. Even at a more advanced

period of education, the dry doctrines of the catechisms produces but little fruit, such at least as is ordinarily taught in schools. We are obliged to make the children repeat, word for word, obscure phrases, which is allied to nothing in their minds, and is therefore a sure means of discouraging them. The serious importance attached to errors of their memory, alarms them; and the dark clouds which envelope religious ideas, make them experience a mixture of terror and weariness, from which they are impatient to be delivered. What acquired formula could balance in utility the effect of such an impression! The more salutary the belief, and the more it makes an essential part of the Christian faith, so much the more necessary is it, to associate it, together with facts, which alone are interesting to children.

Very pious instructers, it is said, teach abstract dogmas with success: may it not be from their piety that this success arises, rather than from the method which they make use of? They influence others by the feeling which animates them, they involuntarily transmit their fervor. Persuasion is often communicated by the means we least think of.

This power of sympathy, this facility with which one flame kindles another in the soul of the child, shows what may be the influence of woman, and gives great dignity to her condition. Upon her depends the religion of future generations. Her prolonged influence may confirm her daughters in piety, and leave in the memory of her sons, who go far away from her, traces which time can never efface. It is hers to cultivate dispositions the seeds of which have been sown by God himself. "When all that is sacred in the mother," says J. P. Richter, "addresses itself to all that is sacred in the child, their souls understand and reply to each other."

The best mode of procedure with little children, whether

our object be to make them love religion, or to connect it with moral perceptions, appears to me so well described in an English work, that I will take the liberty of quoting two pages.

"But how, some parents will ask, shall we proceed in order to direct the affections of these young creatures in the ways of God, and duty? This appears impossible. Believe me, we may accomplish much, even with very young children, by placing gradually before their eyes religious truths, associated with agreeable images, if our manner only expresses tenderness and serenity, and we are animated with a spirit conformed to our design. The names of God and Jesus Christ ought early to be rendered familiar to children; and the power, holiness, and particularly, the love of these divine persons, should be so depicted, and rendered so sensible by artless and simple representations, that the thoughts of them would sink deeply into their young souls. And while we thus give to the child the first elements of religious instruction, we inspire him with holy respect, and a love of heavenly things. But we must particularly avoid fatiguing him with long discourses, and also exciting his emotions too strongly. A little here, and a little there will be the mother's policy. And even for this little, she will choose moments when the child will lend her a willing ear, and will suffer the conversation to drop, before the subject becomes wearisome or insipid. Nothing will more advance her object, than short and simple narrations from the Bible; such, for example, as Jesus Christ taking little children in his arms and blessing them, or of the same Jesus, restoring the widow's son to life, and many others similar. If these histories are related with a cheerful air, and animated with such touching simplicity as would present them vividly to the imagination of the child, he will rarely fail to take pleasure in them, and will ask you to repeat them again and

again. When once engraven in his memory, it is evident that we may allude to them with advantage, when we have occasion to reprimand or exhort the little pupil.

"A very important point for the mother in communicating instruction, is always to bear in mind, that she will succeed much better with children by exciting their sympathy, than by addressing their reason. It is doubtless necessary, that good sense should characterize all we say; but if the feelings of the child do not correspond with his conviction, he may be fully persuaded of certain truths, without their having any practical influence upon him." *

The parables of the gospel—an admirable method of instruction for simple minds—happily leads also to some development of moral ideas; but I would not have even the precepts of the scripture singly presented. A duty imposed under an uninteresting form, produces a disagreeable impression upon children. When a passage of the sacred writers is always used to support a prohibition, or an act of severity, it seems that the will of God is employed to veil our own; and hence, results an indifference, and a sort of distrust of the secret object of our lessons.

Children are often actuated by laudable and entirely disinterested motives; they are, above all, sensible to the happiness of being approved, of being loved by their parents, and even by God.

But when one pays no regard to these feelings, and presents a dry, and oftener a troublesome rule, it is immediately necessary to have recourse to the idea of future punishment and reward; and chiefly to punishment, for this makes the deepest impression upon the child. It presents itself always to his mind, clothed in those material images, which through our means he is but too much

* A Practical View of Christian Education in its early stages,

in the way of forming, while we present to his hopes but spiritual rewards, at which it is not in his nature to rejoice. Fear therefore, predominates in this kind of impressions, and this is the feeling most injurious to youth. There is true barbarity in destroying the security of infant minds, and it is plainly against the divine will to do it. In order to indemnify the child for his want of strength, Heaven has endowed him with a confiding spirit: to show him any other deity than the good and paternal God, is at the same time a lie and a blasphemy; it is even an act of dark and revolting paganism; for how shall we designate a divinity, who, under a sacred name, is used as a bugbear to frighten children.

The idea of God cannot indeed, be separated from his attribute of justice; we should therefore falsify in another sense this august idea, if we did not sometimes present him under a severe aspect to children. God's abhorrence to evil, and his anger when his law is outraged, are the necessary consequences of his most beneficent attributes. There is, at the same time, a sort of fear in the child, necessarily accompanying the persuasion that an immense power is exerted to maintain order in the universe, and to make its laws respected; but such a fear is absorbed in the predominant idea of the goodness of God, of the protection which his most rigorous justice assures to the feeble. He is the father of little children; he keeps, he takes care of those who are good; he hears them when they pray, and aids them in obeying him. If they even commit one fault involuntarily, he pardons it when they repent. God undoubtedly detests evil, and cannot look with complacency upon the wicked; but he loves his creatures, he opens his arms to them as soon as with sincere contrition they have shut out evil desires from the heart. Jesus Christ has interceded, he was sacrificed for men; by invoking this sacred name with love, the guilty is par-

doned, and even restored to favor. There are no longer any traces of his sin.

Such is the entirely evangelical doctrine, of which we may give a slight outline to the child. The thought of the Almighty power, of a pure and holy God, of his love which is proportioned to the efforts of the child to obey him; this thought, I say, will by degrees form his morality. The influence of the mild and tender sentiments of piety is naturally more salutary, and at the same time more constant than is that of the sentiments of fear; since, owing to the lightness of youth, it is very easy to escape from the idea of a God whom we never see, and who does not punish instantaneously.

With regard to a union so important and desirable as religion and morality in education, it seems to me very essential to be ourselves well acquainted with the point in question. Doubtless the only proof of the progress, I will say of the existence even of religion in the heart, is drawn from the power which it exerts over the conduct. The moral point of view is the one to which it is always necessary to recur, because from this alone we judge of the sincerity and good direction of religious ideas. But it is nevertheless essential to place eternal interests in the foreground, to make the accomplishment of our duties here below considered as the necessary condition of our union with God in another life. If this order is inverted, and our object is this life alone — if to this end we live wisely and in an honorable manner, we take from religion all its force and virtue. When we use it as the only means, the consequence is that the means fail. The essence of religion consists in the love of God; its interests are eternal: inspire such a sentiment, therefore, if you wish religion to serve as the foundation for morality; let the Almighty be considered as the author of all good, as the dispenser of all joy, before you represent him as the judge,

or the severe censor. Why, to produce piety, should we take measures that we would not to excite an earthly affection? The mother has for a long time caressed her new-born child, before she corrects him; she is for a long time careful to manifest an amiable and affectionate spirit, that the remembrance of her tenderness may at a future day, temper the effect of her severity. God himself acts thus with a little child, and manifests himself by benefits, before addressing him in the stern voice of conscience. It is injustice to the Most High, if we may so speak, to present Him to the child under an aspect that he would not choose, and which we would not choose for ourselves. An excessive eagerness to reap the fruits of piety, often prevents us from cultivating its root, which is the love of God.

CHAPTER IX.

RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

"The spirit of God, which dwells with the pure in heart, will inspire the little child with language to address him."—FENELON.

IF, during the whole course of religious education, the desire of rendering homage to God does not increase in proportion as instruction is unfolded, a knowledge of the most elevated truths remains unfruitful in the heart. All nature, and the Gospel, tell us of a Creator, but it is by means of worship alone, that our soul enters into communion with Him. Without worship we remain strangers to God, indifferent to his perfections, indifferent whether, even in a feeble degree, his image is produced in us. It is by worship, principally, that religion, vital, active, and fruitful in good works, takes possession of the individual.

The worship of the heart is doubtless the first of all. A homage involuntarily offered, doubtless has more earnestness and a sincerity more indubitable, than a homage provoked by example, supported by habit, and directed by customary forms;—but how shall we lead the child to this pure adoration? How excite at first, and renew afterwards, the pious transports which elevate the soul even to God, without any external impulse? Where shall we

procure the heavenly flame, that we may communicate it constantly, and keep the lamp always burning?

The object we aim at, is the spontaneous worship of the soul, the adoration of a spiritual God in spirit and in truth; but this object we know not how to attain at once: care, and a judicious choice of means is necessary in order to arrive at it. What does education present, that we can obtain in any other way?

The most natural means, and those best fitted to the proposed object, will be for the mother to make a free and rapid communication of her own impressions. Let her feel vividly the benefits of God, and the child will feel them likewise. If, when he receives an unexpected pleasure, you return thanks to God for him, he will soon unite his homage with yours. "O my God! I thank thee that thou hast made such a person so good to me," is the little tribute of gratitude which Miss Hamilton advised should be suggested to the child, as soon as he becomes the object of an unhoped for favor. God, who holds in his hand the hearts of all men — God who clothes the lilies of the field, and is not unmindful even of the little birds — God who is the immediate author of all that we admire in nature, and the dispenser of these brilliant faculties by which frail humanity has produced so many miracles of art. Here is the subject of a thousand dialogues, the deep which may cover a thousand interesting forms: here is the aliment which may be proportioned to every degree of feeling as well as intelligence in the pupil, and provide for their greatest development.

But the most regular means will always be the most certain. It should therefore consist of private worship, such as comports with the age of the child, of exercises of piety daily continued, and always suited to his growing capacity. Regularity is necessary to all of us: it is only by means of time that we can influence the soul; we

must devote it to the accomplishment of all our desires. And since time, which among the Creator's gifts we have *most* at our disposal, acts upon the one we may *least* dispose of—the affections—is it not very happy that by its assistance we may obtain an influence over our involuntary emotions? And when feelings of piety, those faithful guardians of our heart, and therefore of our conduct, are the question,—how can we, when we would prove them, trust to those momentary impressions which are continually deceiving us?—how can we omit having recourse to that particular appropriation of certain hours to worship, which has been found useful on so many occasions.

If it is true that we cannot depend upon ourselves, how much less can we depend upon the child! More changeable, more volatile than we are, he is less accustomed to occupy himself with objects purely intellectual. Morally feeble, without even perceiving what is necessary to him, he ought to learn to desire it. It is necessary that there should be rooted in the constitution, if I may use the expression, a desire to grow in spiritual things, to receive every day from God, strength in the inner man. To this effect every thing of inferior order—habits, modes, example should be presented as the necessary instruments of that most elevated work of education, the formation of a religious will, and that consecration of the whole life, which is the result of it.

The same sacred books which furnish an occasion of instruction in religious education, are found to be a great aid in worship; that is to say, a powerful means of elevating the soul to God. The Scriptures have a peculiar language, energetic and significant, which produces an unparalleled effect upon those who possess its spirit, which effect is a matter of surprise to those who do not thus feel it. Children who are endowed with such a wonderful

instinct in every thing that appertains to the expression of thought, quickly feel its force and beauty. Select passages of the bible, read in the bible itself, and not from any abridgment or extract book, inspire them with respect, mingled with great interest. The majesty and oriental brilliancy of the imagery, in the Old Testament, captivate their imagination; the plainness and simplicity of the parables in the New, soften their hearts. But the Psalms, above all, open to them an abundant source of consolation and love. They draw thence a feeling for the beauties of Creation, and learn the harmonious concord between religion and nature. The youngest children repeat these with true delight, and never hear them, without pleasure in after life. *

It is desirable that little religious canticles, more particularly adapted to infancy, should be composed after these perfect models. In the modern schools, called infant schools, as well as in many English families, children sing in concerts, hymns which produce the most melting effect. They all seem penetrated with the feelings express-

* The force of these earliest impressions, is the reason that we have not succeeded in adopting for our church music translations superior in poetical merit to the feeble version of the Psalms, by Clement Marot. The words which we have heard in infancy, always act more powerfully upon the heart. It is for the reason that the author gives, for retaining in France an old version of the Psalms, that we are sorry to see any new translation of the Scriptures. The words and the phraseology, to which from infancy we have listened with reverence, become hallowed in our minds, along with the ideas they convey. We would not like to see an aged and venerable friend dressed in the newest fashion; much less do we desire to see the Holy Scriptures altered in their dress to correspond to the current language of the day. They have descended to us from antiquity, let us hand them down to our posterity unchanged and unadulterated.—[Ed.]

ed, and the youngest among them delight to join their feeble voices with their elders.

Why, when the object is so good, and the means so innocent, should we refuse to employ the magical aid of harmony? The music of song particularly, produces on him who executes it a singularly powerful and characteristic impression; he pronounces as if by inspiration, the words associated with it, and it seems that he who sings, breathes out his own emotion—a dangerous property of this art, when we consider the sentiments which they ordinarily convey, and there is therefore more reason that, in education, we should recall them to their ancient and sacred design.

Even when there is but one child to educate, we may still call music to aid our worship. The mother when addressing her first born, may already in her songs, proclaim the blessings of Deity. "How," says J. P. Richter, "shall we impart gentleness to the young spirit in any more effectual way, than by means of that voice of song which issues from the soul; that voice already loved by the child, when it spoke but in simple words, and now appears suddenly clothed with brightness, and as if come from the heavenly glory?"

This however is a mere accessory. The most important act of worship, that which constitutes its very essence, is prayer. The idea of prayer, at once so grand and simple, is allied to all our relations with Deity. The simple contemplation of the Divinity almost supposes prayer, since associated with it is an invincible desire to draw from the immense source of strength, of holiness, and happiness. It is in our nature to pray: prayer is the sigh of the captive soul, an anticipation of its deliverance, a presentiment of eternity. In every degree of civilization man prays. The savage, who is a stranger to the benefits of revelation, prays; and the Christian, who is perfected

in faith, prays also. All that we can conceive of the condition of heavenly intelligences, is prayer: we believe the angels pray, and we know that Jesus Christ when on earth prayed unceasingly. The necessity of prayer has appeared so inherent even in the most sublime essence, that there is a passage in the Talmud where it is said, that "God himself prays"—an extravagant thought unquestionably—but in harmony with some secret cord of our heart, of that eager and suffering heart, which cannot think of perfection without a transport and an aspiration towards a superior state of being.

This act of invocation, so natural in itself, is so much the more agreeable to the little child, because he passes his life in asking. Our language in addressing God is almost all borrowed from his,—so do his relations with us offer an image, imperfect, it is true, but nevertheless striking, of ours with the Divinity. In all his troubles he cries, "my father," and we call upon "our father" also. He will feel that he ought to pray, as soon as the smallest ray from on high penetrates his soul.

With respect to prayer, as well as the whole of worship, the regular observance of it is the course which conducts to its spontaneous and involuntary offering. I think we ought to endeavor, then, each day to elevate the soul of the child towards its author, without even awaiting the moment when instruction, properly speaking, commences. The name of God is never entirely unknown to the child; he has heard this sacred name pronounced with respect and love, before he has attached any distinct idea to it, and therefore, when it is awakened in its grandeur, it finds his heart prepared. If you perceive that such an impression is produced, gradually nourish and strengthen it by keeping it gentle and serene; and if you have children of a more advanced age, who already enter with solemnity into the benefit of prayer, at the close of this holy exer-

cise, go and seek your youngest-born, take him in your arms, join his little hands together, and in a brief and natural manner, implore the blessing of the Most High upon his brothers and sisters, and himself. This worship ought not to last but an instant; but this instant is sufficient to bring forward a tender germ, and each day will lead to a new development.

Even when you have no other children, you may associate your son with you in prayer, while he is yet very young. Teach him to say—'Oh my God, I love thee, because thou art so good; I pray thee to love me also!' If these simple words are only accompanied with feeling on your part, the child will understand their meaning; they will at least excite in him a tender affection, and this is all we can desire. He will undoubtedly ask you if you see the good God; you will tell him no, but that He sees you, that he hears and knows all things, and that he loves good children.

It may be seen that practically I place agreeable instruction and worship in the fore-ground. But if it is necessary that one precede the other, (I may be pardoned for thinking thus,) I would commence with worship. When we speak of terrestrial objects, it is necessary to know, in order to love them; but when the question is of God, it is only by adoring that we can comprehend him; and love produces intelligence. This appears singular, but 'prayer is a supernatural work,'* and may be accomplished by unusual means. That great genius, who was born in the bosom of paganism says, 'The soul better comprehends divine truths in the flight of a holy inspiration, than when guided by cold and circumspect reflection. And let us not pretend that this has nothing to do with

* Leighton's Expository Works.

children. They also have their extacies, their sudden illuminations, which are sometimes the more striking from being contrasted with the habitual obscurity of their impresssions.

I believe a sensible and forward child, when nearly three years old, may admit the first dawning of religion into his soul, and consequently become capable of worship. I know we may retard this moment. There are very intelligent mothers, who do not begin to make their children pray, until after they have attained their seventh year. When piety has been inspired in any other way; when the feelings are already such, that the anticipation of prayer holds as distinct a place in the spirit as the act itself, — this delay may have the advantage of reserving the novelty, and consequently a stronger impression of prayer, for the age when less docile children are more disposed to avoid us. But when this is not the case, I would never advise to sacrifice the assured effect of habit, for a certain economy in the employment of means, which we cannot always have the disposal of. It is risking much to depend, for a difficult age, upon a resource which this very age will render less easy to employ.

Without speaking of the principal benefit of prayer — the grace which it obtains from Heaven — this worship, directed by an intelligent mother, becomes the most useful instrument in forming the character of a child. Nothing more directly influences his mind with respect to religion, than the aid which we solicit upon this very point. To ask that we may love God more and more, is the surest means of becoming affected with his love; to implore the gift of a tender piety, active and tolerant towards men, is to conceive a just idea of what such a feeling ought to be. Care should be taken that the child do not recite vain forms mechanically; and that every word he pronounces should come from his heart. It is the same

with respect to morality. If the mother makes her child repeat after her, sentence by sentence, little simple prayers that she will vary according to the occasion, she will thereby have a sweet means of communicating to the child, all the feelings she desires should animate him. Gratitude towards those who take care of him, sweetness, docility, zeal to fulfil his little duties, in a word, the best dispositions of childhood may be promoted by means of worship.*

In order to recall the wandering mind of the child, and to render present to his thoughts the great objects of religion, the mother may commence for herself a more solemn invocation than I dare presume to dictate. I therefore borrow the following from one of the best religious writers of our church, M. Cellerier.

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* The remembrance of the unaffected and fervent piety of a little motherless child, who was at six years of age, much with us, is fresh in our recollection. It was pleasant to go, at her hour of bed time, and witness the serenity of her mind when offering up her simple petitions. With a voice soft and sweet as we might imagine that of a seraph, she called upon 'Our Father, which art in heaven'—her heart seemed to expand with more than usual confidence towards her friends at this period, and she seemed delighted to talk with them about God and heaven, and to ask questions upon religious subjects. One evening, she was more than usually confidential, and for the first time almost in her life, remarked upon the faults of another. She spoke of one of her little companions, who had told a lie. She thought she must be afraid to pray to God, because she had been wicked; 'but, Aunt,' said she, in tones of perfect humility and innocence, 'I don't do wicked things.' This was not boasting, but the testimony of a clear conscience; and although when she was older, Mary Treat was deeply sensible of the fallen nature of which she partook, and of her need of regenerating grace, yet when in the bloom of life she was called to lie down upon a bed of death, she evinced all the serenity and confidence in God which had marked her childhood, and her conscience bore witness that she had not done wicked things. [Ed.]

'Lord, our God and our father, we prostrate ourselves before thee to invoke thee. May thy Holy Spirit dispose us to pray to Thee with sincerity and fervor; and may the adorable name of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of men, ascend to thy throne, and obtain thy blessing upon us.'*

But concerning the child, in order that what I have in view may be fairly understood, I subjoin some little prayers which he will easily be able to comprehend, at the age of three years. I have laid aside doctrinal instruction, in order to express the feelings which he may really experience. One may readily compose those, which are better and more complete; since, conformably to the spirit of childhood, I have done little more than offer one petition at a time; but I ought to say, however, that the trial of them, has produced good effects.

O my God, my God! how many blessings thou hast bestowed on me, how many pleasures thou hast given me! Thou hast given me kind parents, brothers and sisters to play with me, and nurses to take care of me. Thou hast given me a great many things which make me happy. Continue all these blessings to me, O my God: I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, thy Son.

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* The following as near as we can recollect, are the words of a child of seven years old. 'O God, I thank thee for giving me so many good things in this world, and for the Bible, which tells about the Saviour, who loves little children, and died to save their souls. Wilt thou make me a good child, that I may love thee and Jesus Christ the Saviour, and be obedient to my mother, and kind to my sister. Forgive me for having been idle and bad tempered: Oh God, bless my dear mother and grandmother, my aunt, and my sister; and grant that I may be a comfort to my friends and a pious child, so that I may be prepared, when I die, to go to thee, and to my dear friends who are now in heaven. Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake.' [Ed.]

O my God! who dost take care of me, and hast mercy upon me! thou knowest that I am but a little child, and very weak; that I can neither clothe or feed myself; and that if left to myself, I should be very helpless: but every body cares for me, every body loves me. It is thou, my God, who hast made others so good to me: reward them, oh my God, and make me grateful and good. I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, thy Son.

O my God! thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, has said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me.' My God, I am a little child, and I come to thee. Come to me also, oh my God. Keep me from forgetting that Thou seest me; then I shall always feel that Thou lovest, and takest care of me, and that when I die thou wilt receive me to thine arms. I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, thy Son.*

My God, my God! when I am very good and my parents are satisfied with me, I feel then as if I dared to pray to thee. But, alas! to-day I have been perverse and disobedient, and I am ashamed to approach thee. I conjure thee, notwithstanding, oh my God, that thou wilt not cease to love me! I am always so unhappy after my faults! Our good Saviour has obtained pardon for those who repent. I repent, oh my God: pardon me for his sake!

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* We cannot too early associate sweet and religious feelings with the idea of death. Children of five and six years old, have manifested the greatest consolation in suffering, in the hopes of Christianity, and in their last hour have felt the approaches of death without fear. See a notice on the school of Spitalfields by M. Wilderspinn. p. 54.

Hear me, oh my God! Thou seest that I am but a little child, but they tell me I have been much smaller; that I could neither sit, walk, or run, as I do now. I pray thee, oh my God, who hast been so good to me, be equally good to all the poor little children, who are as helpless as I was, and who are not so well taken care of. Comfort, oh my God, all who suffer: I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Oh my God, I wish to obey thee, but I am always committing some fault. I see that if thou dost not help me, I shall never be good, Help me, then, to keep thy commandments, oh my God! to love thee with all my heart and mind, and to love my neighbor as myself. I ask this, oh my God, in the name of Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Lord, thou hast commanded us to pray for each other. First, then, I pray for my parents, for my countrymen, and also for those who are not my countrymen. I pray thee, oh my God, for those who know thee, and for those also who know thee not, that they may learn to know and love thee. I pray also, oh my God, for all the world.* I invoke thee in the name of Jesus Christ, thy Son.

Prayer for Sunday.

Oh my God, to-day is Sunday, when every body goes to church, to pray to thee. I am too little to go there; but

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* This prayer is perhaps not very natural; for a child left to himself, would not think of offering supplications for those who are unknown to him; but I wish to show how the mother may make use of worship, to inspire the child with various good feelings; and, there are few more necessary to associate with the idea of religion than toleration.

I may adore thee also, oh my God! When I go into the country, I see the bright sun which thou hast made, and the beautiful earth where there are so many charming flowers, and pretty birds, and good fruits. I thank thee for all these things; and when I have grown large, I will also go into thy temple, and sing thy praises, and read thy holy word; and all my life I will love and endeavor to obey thee. I ask this, &c.

I will here subjoin two prayers that will serve to give the child an idea of the offerings he may present to God at the beginning and end of the day, when he chances to be left alone.

Morning Prayer.

Oh Lord, I thank thee that thou hast taken care of me during the night: take care of me also, I pray thee, during the day. I will try to remember that thou art always near me, and then I shall not be afraid of any thing, but offending thee. Bless, oh my God, my parents, and all that I love. I ask this, &c.

Evening Prayer.

Oh my God, I will not sleep without having asked thy blessing. Thou hast been very kind to me to-day, although I have committed many faults. Pardon them, oh Lord! I will try to be better to-morrow. I shall go to sleep now, thinking that thou watchest over me during my slumbers. In the name of thy Son, I pray to thee.

Most of these prayers are vague, but the child ought to be encouraged to present such as are more minute. If he expresses the desires of his heart, his offerings, with-

out doubt, will be very puerile; but of what consequence is it? Are there many earthly prayers that are not? Let us rejoice that he speaks to God from his inmost soul, without intruding too much into his little secrets. Tell him, notwithstanding, that our wishes are very often rash, and that in expressing them, we should submit them to His will who desires our happiness. Advise him to ask the Lord not to listen, if the accomplishment of his desires would lead to fatal consequences. We shall thereby accustom him to support privations with sweetness; we shall prepare him to meet disappointments and misfortunes with that resignation animated by hope, which is called confidence in God.

Whatever liberty we may allow the child in his more secret devotions, there is, nevertheless, one prayer that I would make him learn by heart, as soon as he shall have acquired any habit of calling upon God. This is the Lord's Prayer. It may be his faithful companion from the cradle to the grave. Its comprehensive meaning is constantly unfolding, and becoming more beautiful and sublime as we advance in age.

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The soul, a pure * intelligence, comes into this world to which it is a stranger, and finds itself united to a portion of matter, equally strange, called body. Susceptible of infinite development, and endowed with the dispositions necessary to enter into relation with the moral and physical world, it seems destined not to display its activity, except when the impressions it receives through the medium of the body, call its faculties into play, and furnish materials for their exercise. But as impressions excited by the senses, are not of a nature to establish all the relations which the soul is called to support, it has need of another resource. Consequently, to aid it when it enters upon its career, an assistance has been prepared, which we call supernatural; if an effect of which we cannot state the cause, may be thus designated. This assistance which we may call instinct, is not profusely lavished. It is always given upon indispensable occasions, but not when, having in time acquired knowledge from the lessons of experience, the soul can do without it.

Thus, in the period soon after its birth, the soul does not display its attributes. The wondrous machine which encloses it, is useless to him, because he knows not how to employ it. An admirable organization seems to have been calculated in vain to produce these two different effects, that of informing the soul of what passes outwardly, and that of executing its orders; the soul does not comprehend what is announced by the body, and has not yet acquired the power to direct it. Enslaved in his double ignorance, he can only become acquainted with external objects, by exercising the organs of the sense; and the properties of these organs can only be revealed by external objects.

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* The soul.

The concurrence of the will is not however necessary, in order that the soul should receive impressions. It feels pain and pleasure, but the mind remains passive. With the child, every thing is vague and confused; nothing possesses reality or consistence. The forms which pass and repass before his eyes, are but as fugitive shadows. The various noises which he hears, the shocks which he may receive from solid bodies, are as yet but unconnected events to him; he experiences changes which he seeks not to explain. In this state, hunger would be a suffering with which no idea of alleviation could be associated, and the new-born child would die of inanition, without knowing that he wants food, if Heaven had not provided for the preservation of his existence. Here instinct is needed, and instinct has been given. The child seeks, and seizes the maternal bosom; and is quieted, and strengthened.

In the mean time a constant repetition of the same impressions call the faculties of the soul into exercise. Sensations become connected in the mind, and the memory re-produces them, in the order they were in reality presented. Thus I have seen a child of twelve days old, who could not certainly at this age discriminate between objects, show by indubitable signs that he comprehended when he was to receive the breast. He then recollected, he hoped; two great faculties, memory and imagination were excited. The intellectual being was revealed.

The development of the understanding is not apparently much retarded in infancy by the weakness of the body since this weakness only affects such members as perform the will of the soul, and the soul in the commencement of its existence, possesses not the power of volition. On the other hand, the organs of sense, whose vocation it is simply to inform the soul, fulfil their office almost from birth: thus the ear and the eye are always bringing in reports, little comprehended at first, it is true, but nevertheless per-

fectly faithful. The progress of the moral and physical faculties seem, then, so to have been combined, that in proportion as the soul is in a state to command, she finds in the body an adroit and docile servant.

When once the child is enabled to combine the testimony of its various senses, his ideas acquire fixedness; the external world always appears to him under more distinct forms; he fancies himself surrounded by real objects, and begins to awaken as if from a dream, where every thing was confused and changing.

The soul, however, that spiritual essence, is not merely called to enter into relation with the material world, but its noblest faculties demand another exercise. Another order of phenomena then hastens to manifest itself in the new-born infant, which is clearly distinct from the order of sensible ideas. It is astonishing to see how little knowledge is necessary in order to effect the development of the moral sense. Before the child is able to use his hands, and, by taking hold of the things which he sees, is convinced of the reality of their existence, an object comes forth from the cloud which wraps the universe, and awakens his tender feelings. This object is an expressive countenance, a face that smiles upon the child. At this novel appearance his soul is impelled towards another soul; he has recognized its image, when he had before distinguished nothing. Thus sympathy becomes manifest, that astonishing instinct, that wonderful devotion, which independent of experience, initiates the earliest age in those mysteries of the heart, which the most mature age cannot comprehend.

The feeling of expectation which usually produces in the child a regular succession of sensations, proves that he has a confused idea of the constancy of the laws which govern nature. A first event announces a second, and although it is his imagination only which is in play, his

present foresight comprehends the source of future reason. The new-born babe soon perceives that he exerts a power over himself, in his cries, for example, which, although at first involuntary, he now prolongs or suspends at pleasure; and when he perceives that by moving his little members, he communicates motion to other objects, he feels himself to be a cause; and the great idea of cause becomes insensibly developed in his mind. At first conceived in the physical economy, this idea is soon transferred to the moral world. As soon as the child understands that he can act upon his species, he uses them as instruments; he persuades, he directs those who carry him, and his will, although impotent in himself, animates beings stronger than he. From that time, undefinable communications exist between him and his protectors. While he has yet no means of communing with us by word, he takes advantage of an intelligence of sympathy, which soon creates a peculiar language. And when genuine tenderness is joined to this instinct of the heart, an exchange of feelings is established between the child and ourselves, which, from their fervor and continual change, often prove too strong for his frail constitution.

In the mean time, the strength of the child is increasing, and gives more salutary exercise to his faculties; more to be depended upon, and more manageable, they enable him to perform experiments which are always sources of pleasure to him. A propensity to imitation, which proceeds from sympathy, and the love of action suggest to him a thousand attempts, and various circumstances lead to new improvements. From this period, most of the inclinations of the human soul are successively put into motion. We see a child of a year old, by turns manifesting self-love, pride, vexation, shame, rancor, and often generosity, and pity A stranger to all coherent thoughts, he is moved by the same desires, tastes, predilections, and

anticipations which influence us, and which are falsely attributed to reason.

But the greatest object of interest to the observer, is to see traits formed which characterize the human species, and assign to it a separate rank in creation. Notwithstanding the proofs of knowledge which we attribute to the new-born infant, he is inferior to all animals of the same age, in a most important point; and that is, the power of watching over his own safety. The education of the organs of sense, although much slower in him, appears to us more rational, it is true: that is to say, that we can better explain it by the regular succession of causes and effects. Whether the shorter life of animals does not leave sufficient space for the long lessons of experience; or, whether an inferior intelligence requires more direct aid, — it is certain that the wonders of instinct are from infancy more numerous and striking in animals, than in man. But through the abasement of the human creature at his entrance into life, it is curious to see the signs which are precursors of his future elevation.

One of these indications of superiority, is the lively and agreeable impression produced on the soul of the child, by objects which are entirely foreign to the instinct of preservation, and corporeal enjoyments — those incitements to beings less richly endowed. From the age of six or seven months, he shows himself capable of admiration; and brilliancy of colors, as well as harmony of sounds, cause him transports of joy. Source of the arts, the pure sentiment of beauty is accorded to the feeble child who has no idea of utility; and curiosity, the first germ of a love of science, is soon displayed in him. These two noble inclinations have thus a disinterested origin, which we too often permit them to contradict.

Scarcely has the second year commenced, than another prerogative of the human species offers itself to our view.

At the appearance of striking objects, the child pronounces the name he has heard given to them, and his design in this novel exercise seems at first to be only his pleasure. But when he has once discovered the use of language; when he has ascertained that these words, which he loves to pronounce, are a means of making himself obeyed, all his faculties are exerted to acquire the possession of this means. His progress in the art of speaking now becomes astonishing; its rapidity would even be inexplicable, if, in respect to it, the child was not endowed with faculties far superior to adults, as Al. Itard, a skilful physician, has demonstrated. To study the process by which he begins to make use of the various parts of language, is calculated to throw light upon the progress of his intellectual development.

But whatever sagacity the child displays in the course of this apprenticeship, we must not be led into error upon the nature of his mind. It has been believed, because he makes use of the plural number, and designates animals and fruits by the names of the species, that he must necessarily conceive abstract ideas; an opinion which I cannot adopt. The names of species, as well as other general terms, are not, it appears to me, in him the expression of an abstract idea already conceived. In order that the child may attach an abstract meaning to these terms, it is necessary that he should be able to separate ideas, so that he may discover in one object the qualities, which permit it to be classed with others similar to it. Now this retrograde movement is the effect of a voluntary operation of the mind, of which the child, at two or three years old, has no knowledge. If he is not absolutely incapable of it, he has at least few motives to incite him to this labor of the mind, and he remains a stranger to reflection.

Without seeking to explain anew, how the child is led to make use of abstract terms, I will say that we are con-

stantly liable to be deceived by supposing, that every thing passes in the minds of children, in the same manner that it does in ours. What in us is a train of thought, is in them but the anticipation of a succession of impressions. Their imagination transports into the future certain sensations, which they are already acquainted with, and they judge that such and such objects will procure to them greater or more prolonged pleasure than certain others. If they give to these anticipations an appearance of rationality, it is because the employment of our forms of speech costs them nothing; and because with their astonishing facility to imitate us, they can express, in general terms, the particular idea, which occupies them.

Apparently, then, the little child forms a judgment, which is the result of a rapidly made comparison; but he is not yet capable of reasoning — an operation of the mind which compares former judgments, and draws a general conclusion from them. He wants at the same time not only materials for reasoning, that is to say, facts already judged, stored up in his memory, but motives sufficiently pressing to employ the few materials he has collected. Necessity obliges the man to propose to himself precise designs, and therefore he must reason, in order to accomplish them; but as the same necessity does not exist for the child, who makes no provision for his own wants, he has no decided aim to which he attaches any importance. The passing designs which the child forms, are only occasions to exert his strength. His desire is to act, not to obtain the result of his activity. His wants of imagination, which are uncertain and variable as their source, call his faculties into exercise, without demanding great efforts of attention.

If the imagination reign sovereign in infancy, it is because it cannot be otherwise. Previous to the time when the child begins to speak, his soul is not inactive; he is

animated by various emotions. What is it which then passes in his mind? a variety of scenes undoubtedly: objects which attract his attention, become painted from nature in his brain, if I may so speak, without being called forth by the signs or names attached to them; and the picture of the past thus being renewed, excites his fears or hopes. Afterwards when the child begins to speak, this mental panorama loses nothing of its brightness. Perhaps we possess it in a degree at every age, and hence the return of images and remembrances, which sometimes assail us, in the midst of our most reflecting moments; moments when thoughts, clothed in language, would take something from the brightness of these mental exhibitions. The language of the child, which comprises but a few scattering words, that are uninteresting to him, do not restore the images, and consequently the effect is not retained. New developments add to the strength of his impressions, before the habit of using language has had its influence, and his mind, by being employed upon its signs, has a more calm and regular exercise.

If it was the design of the Creator, in respect to man, that the immortal spirit should receive a strong impulse from the present life, the means of making him pursue the most extended course of development, was to place him in the lowest degree at its beginning. Hence, his state of privation and ignorance in infancy. But, in order that the motions of the soul should be voluntary, it would be necessary that motives to activity should be inwoven in its nature; and these Providence has been careful to form in the new-born infant. As he has prepared sympathy for the heart, so he has furnished the intellect with the power of vivid imagination. Not having provided the child with innate knowledge, it is necessary to give him motives to acquire it. Necessity, which so powerfully stimulates the faculties of the man, does not possess

this influence over the child, because what he needs is furnished for him without any effort of his own; he must then have useless desires, and the imagination with which he is endowed, is the fruitful source of them. Moral and physical action are necessary to the child's development, and he loves activity more than contemplation, because necessity gives to his actions a rational design. When arrived at an age to value the result of his efforts, he will be capable of reflection.

Pre-occupied with considering what is wanting to the child, we forget the liberality of nature with respect to him. We do not observe that the order of development, made necessary by his ignorance, is the one most advantageous to morality, as well as to the progress of his reason. Capable of tender affections, from which the dawning conscience has received its first impulse, the infant thereby submits to the influence of education, and soon becomes susceptible to the love of God, that source of perfection in future years. Open to various sensations, he takes interest in a thousand objects, which, by exciting varying feelings, keep his flexible mind in action. The pleasure which he takes in imitating us, joined to the admiration of which he becomes more and more susceptible, fail not to awaken a taste for the arts in its native simplicity. Recitation, music, painting, figures in relief, enchant the child, and he is soon an artist himself. By turns a copyist and an inventor, we see him attempt to realize, in his creations, what he learns and what he imagines. A thousand burlesque or graceful fictions fill up his days: landscapes and edifices proceed from his feeble hands, and his plays are those of a young genius.

Thus, our most brilliant attributes are announced in tender infancy. Grand and daring talents are so humble and timid at their birth, and preceded by such frivolous attempts, that we smile with pity. The dispensation

which renders their development certain, is nevertheless benevolent. It is happy for us, that imagination is indispensable to infancy. For while the course of civilization insures the progress of the sciences, properly so called, and constantly favors the exercise of analysis and reasoning, a profusion of gifts apparently more useless, would be perhaps lost to humanity, if they had not been secured by the dispositions of childhood. Thus nature is always provident; the passing youth of the individual guarantees the eternal youth of the species; the riches of the human mind are preserved entire; talents are imperishable, and those which enriched primitive ages, are still influencing minds at the present period.

But if He who orders nature, has provided for every variety of mind, and an ever renewed originality in the human race, by the power of imagination in children,—He has at the same time prepared a source of general harmony in the sympathy which He has given them. While their feelings accord but little with those of society, of which they begin to make a part, we see those inclinations languish, which receive no sympathy. Without losing, then, altogether the prominent traits of his original character, by degrees the child becomes, in other respects, the man of his country and his age.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

OBSERVATIONS UPON AN INFANT, DURING ITS FIRST YEAR. BY A MOTHER.

When God gives to its mother's arms the little being for whom she has suffered and hoped, what mothers only can comprehend, what a crowd of varying emotions rush upon the soul!—gratitude, for continued existence, and love springing up to greet the new-born spirit, which is hereafter to share in her weal and woe, and to be the blessing or curse of her future existence. A *perfect child*, or one that is born without any deformity of body, is the fulfilment of the mother's hopes for this first period—fancy can build on this foundation, the superstructure of future grace and beauty, genius and goodness. The mother is ever cheered in her severe cares, by pleasant anticipations; or, if experience sometimes suggest fears, yet even then, 'She weaves the song of melancholy joy,' with which hope inspires her.—

> 'No lingering hour of sorrow shall be thine;
> No sigh that rends thy father's heart and mine.'

A young mother, receiving her first-born to her bosom, experiences a strange and new pleasure, and one that is scarcely mingled with thoughts that tend to lessen her delight.

But very different are the emotions of a mother, who has seen the cherished of her bosom die, and laid in the grave,

or who has experienced melancholy changes in life in which the darlings of her love have been partakers.

She looks upon her new-born infant, conscious of the uncertainty which shrouds the future: — from her we cannot expect joy, undimmed by the shadows of past sorrows, which have been faithfully gathered up in the store-house of memory.

But every mother hopes — she hopes that her infant will live, to comfort and cheer her old age; to be *good*, and, it may be, *great*. As far as she is enlightened, as to her maternal duties, and the means of realizing her fond hopes for her child, almost every mother exerts herself to do. What a pledge for virtuous conduct is the character of a mother? though she might trifle with her own reputation, can she endure the thought of bequeathing infamy to her offspring? May the time come when every virtuous child may proudly say, 'Behold my mother!' and when every mother may joyfully say, 'Behold my child!'

The first Three Months.

In giving some of my observations upon my own child, during its infancy, I would wish it to be understood, that the little incidents which I may relate, are not introduced on account of their appearing to myself in any degree extraordinary — it is because *they are ordinary*, that I mention them; it is because the little history of my own infant is the history of every other child, that I attempt to give a sketch of it.

The philosopher in his attempts to show the nature of the human mind, must go back to infancy, and from that period trace the gradual development of the senses, the intellectual faculties, and the emotions. But philosophers are not mothers, and therefore incapable of comprehending the language of infancy. Mothers are not philosophers, and are, therefore, incapable of analyzing and referring to its true principles the language which nature interprets to their hearts, rather than to their understandings.

Circumstances had for several years led me to the perusal of works which treat of the human mind; — having

studied it in books, I resolved, as far as I was able, to watch its unfolding in the infant whom Heaven had bestowed upon me, and for my own satisfaction to make some notes of these observations. I was confirmed in my resolution by meeting with Madame de Saussure's work, in which she urges mothers to keep such notes, for the purpose of throwing all possible light upon the native faculties of the soul, and their progressive development.

The task is more difficult than might be apprehended, since the little actions of an infant seem so *natural*, that we can scarcely persuade ourselves to think they are worth comment. So in the physical world, mankind are prone to seek an explanation of *uncommon* phenomena only, while the ordinary changes of nature, which are in themselves equally wonderful, are disregarded. Comets and earthquakes had occupied the attention of inquirers, long before any one had ever thought of asking what caused the falling of a stone, or how warmth was produced by the burning of cold substances. An infant cries after its mother; — this is natural, the mother believes; but why is it natural? It is because the child is endowed with a mental faculty, connecting its sensations with the object which gives rise to them, and which is capable of awakening emotions of affection that cluster around the being whose sight suggest ideas of kindness, protection, and sympathy. This faculty is *association*, which, like the attraction of gravitation in the planetary system, binds together the thoughts in a human soul. The mother ought to know that on the proper direction of this faculty depends the moral and religious character of her child, and that as soon as it can distinguish her from strangers, it is, by the operation of the same principle, capable of receiving impressions which may prove favorable or unfavorable to its future well-being. It is this consideration which renders the mother's office so important, and an attempt to give a proper direction to her efforts, by my own observations, will, I hope, meet with indulgence, however imperfectly it may be executed. The remark is often made that all infants seem

much alike at first. This is far from being true; since we see some puny and feeble, and others plump and vigorous. The little boy who was the subject of my observations, appeared at his birth healthy and promising. The first anxiety that a mother feels after being certain that her child is free from any bodily deformity, is to ascertain whether its senses are perfect. I mean, whether it possess the five senses allotted to man, which, although the number may sometimes be deficient, is never exceeded. We are not able to determine as soon as a child opens its eyes, that they are formed with the power of vision, since the eye-ball may externally appear perfect while the retina is incapable of forming an image of the rays refracted by the different lenses of the eye; or these lenses may be deficient in the requisite refracting powers — and after all, a perfect image formed upon the retina, may not be conveyed to the mind, through a defect in the optic-nerve. How ought the mother to praise the goodness of God, whose providence takes cognizance of such an infinite variety of parts in the complicated machinery of the human frame, and sets the seal of perfection upon the whole! 'And God saw his work that it was good.'

The first object on which I noticed my infant to fix his eyes steadily, was the black latch of a white painted door, which as the door swung open, was brought near to him. A smile animated his countenance at the same instant. I was touched and surprised at this incident. The first smile of her infant must ever cause a thrill in a mother's heart. Why this particular object should have attracted the attention of my child, I could not comprehend, and what emotion should have produced the smile, appeared still more incomprehensible. I thought much upon it at the time, and spoke of it to some members of the family. The contrast in color between the white door and the black latch, probably engaged its attention. There might have been a feeling of pleasure connected with this new exercise of his power of vision. He was then about two weeks old. When I say the smile which I observed was his first,

I mean the first *voluntary* one — for the smiling which is produced by tickling, and playing with the mouth, is merely spasmodic, and does not indicate emotion.

During its first month, my child required no medicine, except once or twice a little magnesia was given for a slight affection of the bowels, and catnip tea as an anodyne, when it occasionally appeared restless. Once when this failed of quieting it, three or four drops of laudanum were administered; this having been recommended in preference to paregoric, on the ground that the sedative properties of the opiate had a better effect when unaccompanied with articles of a heating nature. In the early part of every pleasant day after the child was a week old, it was carried into the open air, for a short time, the period of keeping it abroad being gradually lengthened. It was thoroughly washed every day with tepid water; cold water, is, I know ecommended; but it seems a harsh and dangerous experiment.

The cap was soon laid aside. I believe physicians are generally agreed that it is better for a child to have its head uncovered, that it may receive a free access of air, which tends to keep the pores of the skin in a healthy state, and thus promotes the growth of the hair.

The hours for sleeping, and the periods for taking nourishment were made as regular as possible; but in the case of a young infant, it is not, in my opinion, practicable to bring its physical habits into a state of perfect regularity. We ought to have our rules, however, and keep to them as closely as may be.

M. Jullien, in his excellent 'Plan of Practical Education,' recommends the following arrangement as suited to the physical nature of a child during the first year: —

'Fifteen hours of sleep in the cradle or upon the bed. Six hours at the breast. Three hours in the open air, in the arms of the nurse, or lying upon a mattress, where he can amuse self and move about, thus gaining muscular strength by the free exercise of his limbs.' It is the opinion of M. Jullien, as well as that of other profound thinkers and close

observers, that not only is the bodily health of an infant, in a great degree dependent on that of the mother, but that with the nourishment he imbibes from her, is conveyed into his soul some portion of the moral qualities, whether good or evil, which predominate in her character.

As it is my object, chiefly to remark upon the moral tendencies of the child, I shall not dwell upon the various minute details connected with its physical education. But I hope the time is not far distant when some judicious mother will have the moral courage to give to the less experienced of her sex, not only directions upon this subject, but the result of her observations through that anxious and delicate period when they so much feel the need of a maternal adviser.*

But I return to the little subject of my notes.—It had now advanced to the age of six weeks, under favorable circumstances, exhibiting as far as its infant character was developed, traits of an amiable and mild disposition, and an excellent constitution of body. At this period it became important that I should spend a few weeks in a place about seventy miles distant. I was aware that my child was quite too young to bear the fatigue of such a journey, but thought it might be rendered comfortable, by slow travelling in an easy carriage. For several miles during the first day we proceeded very comfortably, but as we advanced to a mountain road, which was yet new and very soft, the motion of the carriage became irregular on account of the frequent plunging of the horses into the quagmires which began to be abundant. To add to our trials, a heavy rain set in, whilst we were several miles distant from any kind

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* I have heard a work highly spoken of, which was published some years since under the title of the 'Maternal Physician,' but is now out of print. The author, the widow of the Hon. Royal Tyler, possesses two important requisites for such a work, practical experience, and habits of close observation. It is to be hoped that she will feel it her duty to give to the public a second and enlarged edition of her valuable and much needed book.

of habitation. The carriage being light, the rain was not immediately annoying, but bad as it had been before, soon began to become much worse. There was no retreating; the horses now plunged deep in the mud at every step, moving the carriage only by a succession of violent jerks. These tedious enough to stronger nerves, became very painful to the infant, accustomed only to the most gentle exercise. He screamed in agony at every step, and when the motion ceased for a moment, appeared exhausted with fatigue. I was not without the horrible fear that he might die in my arms before we could reach a resting-place. At length having been six hours in travelling as many miles, we reached the house upon the mountain table-land, which had just been erected for the purposes of an inn. I was conducted with my nurse and infant into a rude apartment, separated from the bar-room by a partition of rough boards, and having a floor of the same material. The bar-room was filled with teamsters, pedlers, and other luckless wights who had become members of the household for the night. In addition to coarse and disagreeable language, wreaths of tobacco-smoke, accompanied by the usual odors of such a place, found their way from the adjoining room, through the large interstices in the open partition. These openings also served to gratify the curiosity of the bar-room company, with respect to the new guests, thus honored with a seat in the parlor; and many a dark visage from time to time was seen peering at us with looks of mingled impudence and inquisitiveness. But I felt that what I had to do was to attend to my infant, who seemed sadly fatigued by the day's labor. On that occasion I thought proper to administer a large anodyne draught, as the best means of quieting his disturbed nerves. The landlady, a kind-hearted woman, pitied me and the poor baby very much, and for my consolation told me 'that one woman had a young child so much injured by riding with it over the mountain-road, that it was always weakly, and did not have its senses like other children.' When I retired to bed with my infant, a sorrowful night's lodging presented itself. My chamber was

indeed covered by a boarded roof, but so imperfectly joined that the rain which then poured down in torrents found various passages through it, and my bed, which was placed in the driest corner of the room, was still exposed to its drippings. It was not easy to quiet my child; for an hour or more it continued to scream at intervals corresponding to those which had elapsed between the jerkings of the carriage. The reflected sensations seemed to produce upon him the same effect as the original ones. After we have been travelling for some time in a steam-boat or sailing in a vessel, we feel the power of this reflection of sensations, and all our reason can scarcely convince us we are not actually exposed to those agitations which are thus reacting upon the nervous system. The human frame in this respect is like a stone, which, having rolled down a hill, still continues to move from the impulse it had received.

In spite of the dreariness of my situation, my anxiety for my child, and the drops of rain which now and then descendedupon my face, I at length fell into a quiet slumber; the child had become quiet; but even in sleep, as if memory was busy in recalling the troubles of the day, he would start and sob deeply. Towards day the storm ceased, the full moon shone forth, accompanied by her retinue of stars; and I then perceived, that although the frail tenement of which I was an inmate had an apology for a roof, it had not even that for a ceiling; for looking, as I lay in my bed, above the blanket which was stretched at its foot to divide my apartment from that of other way-faring people, I perceived that the opposite side of the house was open, and I had the picturesque view of the towering pines, firs, and hemlocks, which rose above me clothing the mountain-side with a dark and frowning forest. Six weeks before I lodged in that house, as I was afterwards informed, the boards of which it was put together were alive, and in the form of tall trees, responding to the murmurs of the forest winds.

I will conclude this history of my child's first journey, by remarking that the remainder was performed very com-

fortably, and through the mercies of a kind Providence no permanent injury was sustained by the infant. But it was a hazardous undertaking, and necessity only can justify the exposure of so young a child, even to the common fatigues of travelling. Home is the place for infants — habit with them is every thing. They must have their usual sleep and food, at the usual periods, or they are disturbed, and become fretful. But when one is abroad with a child, it is often impossible to be regular in these things. People think it a compliment to wish to see the baby — the nurse must then wake it if asleep, and perhaps dress it for the occasion. This dressing and undressing of infants is injurious to their tempers as well as health. Grown people often become less amiable in their dispositions when they meet with many vexations; — how then can we expect the little babe, who is worried and fretted by being thus teazed, will not receive a permanent bias in its temper. It is natural that the mother should feel a pride in showing a beautiful child; and dress at no period of life sets off the person more than in childhood; but it is a foolish and wicked vanity to go to such an excess in this as we often see. For the sake of exhibiting babies in state, many women incur the hazard of being the mothers of inferior men and women.

When my child was three months old, I returned with him to my home. A very great change had taken place in him during the last few weeks. When he rode at the age of six weeks he did not appear to notice the horses which drew the carriage; it is probable that he had not then learned to adopt his visual organs to objects at that distance; he seemed almost unconscious of external things, except as they acted in immediate contact with his sentient organs, and then he showed a very delicate sensibility, as in the case of the motion of the carriage. Now he had begun to feel himself a thing separate from the objects around him. He noticed the horses, observed the whip, and seemed pleased to see it used. He liked to go from mother to nurse, and from nurse to mother: he knew how to distin-

guish them. What an astonishing unfolding of faculties in six weeks! greater probably than is experienced by a child in any subsequent period of the same length.

The Infant at Six Months.

Before the age of six months children begin to shrink from strangers—the passion of *fear* has commenced its development. The helpless beings have learned their own feebleness and need of protection, and they cling to those of whose kindness they feel assured. They seem also to have their likes and dislikes, and thus show that the germs of intellectual *taste* are beginning to unfold. It is important, when they seem afraid of any person or thing, that they should be made familiar with the object, that this fear may be conquered. A coward, whether man or woman, can never be useful or happy; and therefore it is very important that the passion which produces it should be early checked; for if not, it grows rapidly, and when once it becomes rank in the soul, neither philosophy nor religion, in after life, can wholly eradicate it. Two ladies, who one day called to see me, inquired for the baby. The nurse brought him in, and the elder lady, a hard-featured and very plain woman, attempted to take him. The child looking her full in the face, drew back, and began to cry, as if terrified. I took him in my arms and soothed him; in a little while the other person, a young and pretty girl offered to take him; the elder lady said, 'he is afraid of strangers;' but the child, surveying the countenance of the young lady, stretched out his arms in assent to her request, and seemed quite delighted with her attention. I was careful to make him acquainted with the other lady, and thus to conquer the feeling which he had at first manifested towards her.

Children feel an interest in each other when very young. I had opportunities of witnessing several striking illustrations of this fact, before my little boy was five months old. He was at a certain time carried into a room where was a poor sickly babe, of nearly his own age. It lay asleep in

its mother's lap, breathing hard and irregularly, and agitated by convulsive spasms, while upon its pallid brow, hung a cold and clammy sweat. Its limbs had none of the roundness of form, seen in a healthy child, but the skin hung like a loose flabby covering over them. The mother informed me that the babe had been very sick; it was now recovering, but she was obliged, in order to keep it quiet, to administer large portions of laudanum; thirty and forty drops several times in a day, besides paregoric by the spoonful. I could not but feel that she was pursuing a very bad course. She was young and seemed inexperienced, and I ventured to remonstrate, by exposing the great danger to the mental faculties as well as to the constitution, which must attend such a mode of treatment.

My own child presented a very striking contrast to the sickly babe. He was strong, plump and vigorous; every thing about him indicated health. He had been nourished by the food provided by nature, and drugs of all kinds had been carefully avoided. I was far from ascribing entirely to a different mode of management, the difference in the appearance of the two children.

With a sick child, the mother must yield to a physician, and medicines may be necessary to overcome diseases. The experiment of education must here fail; or it must be suspended, until, with returning health, nature shall have asserted her own rights, and become powerful enough to act without those auxiliaries, which, though called in to her assistance, are very prone to usurp her place.

My little boy looked steadily, and with a serious expression upon the sickly baby, as it lay asleep. At length it awoke, though not in a natural manner as a healthy child awakes from sleep, but with convulsive efforts, as if nature had struggled to throw off the chains with which she had been bound by the soporific drug. When the babe was fully awake, and the mother had raised it up, its countenance became animated; the ray of intelligence which beamed from it, showed that disease had not prevented the soul from pursuing her work of development even under

circumstances so unfavorable. The two babies now looked in each other's faces; the healthy one no sooner saw the other open its eyes and begin to move, than he became animated, and with an expression of joy stretched out his hands to take hold of it. The other babe made no attempts to ascertain by the evidence of touch, whether the object before it was a creation of its own mind, or external to itself. The improvement made in the use of its senses had been retarded by disease. Its look was confused like that of a younger infant; it had evidently not yet learned to adapt its organs of sight to different distances, like healthy children of the same age; and when a solid body was put into its hands, the muscles seemed too languid to grasp it. Thus the sense of touch had been little practised, for want of physical strength. The sense of taste must exist in an unnatural perverted state in a child who from its birth is accustomed to drugs. The one I have been describing, as it slept, was sucking a sugar-rag,* to which its mother had so long accustomed it, that it could now scarcely be dispensed with. This had helped to disorder its taste, as well as the tone of its stomach.

At six months old, my child had passed through the various stages of lying in his cradle, and amusing himself in playing with his hands, or gazing on different objects, kicking and rolling over on a mattrass, or the carpet; and next, of being supported by pillows either in the cradle or fastened into a chair. Now he could sit alone; he had learned to pick up his rattle when it fell, and to amuse himself with other playthings. He also took an interest in the movements of those about him, and the power of observation become more strikingly manifest. He began to show that faculty of the mind, which, whether we designate it by

* I give the term which I have usually heard applied, an invention for the purpose of keeping a child still. Sugar with a little bread or pounded cracker, is tied up in a bit of linen, and this is kept into the child's mouth sleeping or waking; nothing could be worse for creating disease in the stomach and bowels of an infant.

the term *desire*, with some metaphysicians, or by that of the *will*, with others, is of little importance, since its management is not to be affected by the name we bestow. We may say that children soon show a strong *desire* to gratify their *will*, or they *will* to gratify their *desire;* and this easy substitution of the one term for the other seems to prove, that men have sometimes busied themselves in making a distinction without a difference.

Without seeing, myself, the necessity of admitting the existence of a power called *will* as distinct from desire, I shall use the former term as being more convenient, and more according to common parlance; though the latter circumstance no more proves the point in dispute, than, the common expression, the *sun rises*, and the *sun sets*, actually proves that that body moves round the earth.

The desires in a young infant are feeble; it requires a tedious process of observations before it learns to associate with its desires the idea of the objects which serve to their gratification. It would cry with hunger, as it would with any other pain, long before it could know that food would relieve it. Of course it did not desire food. But when it has learned to connect the idea of nourishment with the physical want, and has also associated with this the idea of the being from whom he receives it, he then when hungry cries to go to his mother. As soon as the demands of nature are satisfied, the babe is often willing to go from her to others. When the child is old enough to look about, and enjoy the sight of natural objects, the grass, trees, animals, and the various sounds of animated creation, he feels a new and strong delight; he desires or wills a continuation of this enjoyment, and when forced within doors, struggles and cries.

The appearance of the will in children, may be dated from the time when observation has taught them that certain things are desirable. This era, which some parents think should be marked by whipping in a sufficient degree to make the child passive in his desires, or in other words, '*to break his will*,' is certainly an important one. It is

now necessary to begin to teach the child obedience. For instance, a babe at six months old cries when its mother gives it into the arms of another person; now the child ought not to be whipped for this, neither ought the mother to take it directly back; but it should be diverted from its purpose by presenting some object which will interest it.

The first time that my little boy cried on my going from the house was at the age of six months. He had often seen me go out with my hat on, but he had never before appeared to connect with this the idea of absence; this day I noticed that he looked attentively at my bonnet and cloak, and as soon as I opened the door, he began to utter mournful cries. I did not return, because it was necessary that he should become accustomed to my going out at times; but, simple as the affair might have seemed to an indifferent person, it affected my spirits, and even in the house of God, my thoughts would involuntarily turn upon the future trials, that probably awaited this little human being, from the influence of that emotion which for the first time had caused sorrow to his heart.

The Child at Nine Months.

We have now advanced to the period when the infant seems, in laying aside some of its helplessness, to have assumed a character of its own. There is a vast difference at this age between children who have been properly managed, and those who have not. The former can amuse themselves a great deal; they have learned to know that their desires are not always to be gratified; and as they have never gained any thing by crying, they seldom cry, except when ill, uncomfortable, or wearied by being long confined to one situation, which becomes absolutely painful. Their good-nature should never be imposed on. The way to keep children pleasant, is to make them comfortable and happy; and this can only be done, by attention to them: at the same time, too much attention spoils all, by giving the child an idea that every thing must give way to his desires.

Soon after the infant is able to sit alone, he begins to make some attempts to move — after a while it pulls itself up by a chair, and at length is able to stand, by grasping some support with the hands.

At eight months old, my child had become strong enough to bear his weight in this manner. While I was about procuring a standing-stool to favor this new attempt of nature, it happened that a pine box of a foot and a half square was brought into the nursery; and it occurred to me that this might answer my purpose, as well as an article made for the occasion. After putting a bit of carpet over the bottom, the little boy was placed in it. He was highly pleased with his promotion, and soon learned to move his position from one side of the box to another. When tired with standing, he sat down and amused himself with playthings; sometimes he was indulged with an apple of which he was very fond, and which often prevented the necessity of giving aperient medicines. There was some danger that in his fondness for *bon bons*, and the number of his kind friends, he would acquire a habit of gormandizing, especially as in the progress of dentition, he was continually seeking for something to bite. I endeavored to prevent, as far as possible, too much indulgence in eatables — cake, unless plain, dough-nuts or gingerbread, I did not permit him to have; a crust of bread is probably better than either. A piece of ivory, silver, or some hard substance, should be given to children when teething. The wooden box, which did so good service at first, was laid aside within a few weeks, as a catastrophe, which had been feared, at length actually took place. This was the turning over of the box by the little Sampson within, who had, for some time, been exercising himself in throwing his weight suddenly on one side, and at length succeeded in the experiment.

We have now arrived to the creeping age. I had thought I should not suffer him to learn to creep; but after some conversation with physicians, and consulting my own reason concluded to let nature have her own way, and to run the risk of having the child get his clothes soiled for the

advantage of giving a more expanded chest, a stronger back, and finer-shaped shoulders.

Before he began to creep, he was for some months allowed to pass considerable time in the kitchen. The nursery, after a few of the first months, became a dull place to him; he seemed to have taken a dislike to it. The kitchen was more lively, and he found much amusement in watching the different operations, of pounding, grinding, chopping, running to and fro, and all the bustle of culinary operations — all seemed to him a sort of pantomime got up for his amusement; in which opinion he was strengthened by the glances of the domestics, who failed not frequently to smile upon their little favorite. Yet, unless a child is carefully watched, a kitchen is an unsafe place, and in a large family, where there are other children to amuse the baby, it can have variety enough elsewhere. Some mothers are surprised that those whose circumstances oblige them to labor, are able to do so much besides taking care of their young children — the secret is, that the woman who labors, amuses her child by her various household occupations, which she manages to perform as much as possible, within its sight — that is, she *diverts her child with her work*, while the nurse or mother who spends all her time in tending the baby, *works to divert it*. And the evil here is not only the loss of time in the '*pat-a-cake*,' 'ride-the-Jack-horse,' 'high-diddle-diddle,' &c. of the nursery; but the child becomes selfish and imperious, by seeing that he is always an object of attention.

I took much pains to teach my child patience and self-denial, and never allowed him to be indulged because he cried for a thing. The effect of this management was apparent in the readiness with which he yielded to the wishes of others, and the ease with which he accommodated himself to circumstances. I preferred that he should be accustomed to be taken care of occasionally by different persons, in order to inure him to change. There should, however, be one person who feels a constant care over a young child, in order that the state of its health and physical hab-

its may be observed and regulated; this should be the mother, or a faithful nurse.

I was much pleased to study the effects of different countenances upon the mind of my child. With grave and serious people he looked serious; with children he was playful; and with two little girls who occasionally came to see him, he seemed always delighted.

He seemed much perplexed when his aunt, between whom and his mother there is said to exist a strong resemblance, came on a visit. When she first took him in her arms he looked very earnestly at her, and then at me. He had been accustomed to see two images of me, when I had stood with him before the glass; but this was a different affair; he saw it was no illusion, for he could touch it, and he heard it speak; he perceived this without being able to comprehend the matter; sometimes he looked grave, and then laughed as if at his own perplexity. But he soon fixed upon some distinguishing marks in our dresses or tones of voice, by which he recognized the real mother. Here were the faculties of comparison and abstraction exhibited.

Strong excitements have an unfavorable effect upon the nerves of young children. We know this to be the case with ourselves, but are apt to forget that things which are common to us, may be new and striking to them. My child was on a certain evening carried into a large room brilliantly lighted, and filled with company. He gazed around with an expression of admiration and delight not unmixed with perplexity; the latter, however, soon vanished, and he laughed and shouted with great gleè; and as he saw that he was observed, exerted himself still farther to be amusing. He was then carried into a room where was music and dancing; this was entirely new, and he was agitated with a variety of emotions; fear, wonder, admiration and joy seemed to prevail by turns. As the scene became familiar, he again enjoyed it without any mixture of unpleasant feelings.

But the effect of these excitements was apparent, when

he was taken to his bed-room; his face was flushed, as in a fever, his nervous system disturbed, and his sleep was interrupted by screams. He had witnessed scenes as new and almost as strange, as to us would be the apparition of a dance of fairies by moonlight. His imagination had made a powerful effort to grasp and comprehend what his senses had discovered. He knew not who or what were the beings and the sounds which had thus appeared in places, usually so quiet; and the strange motions of these beings, must also have greatly increased the wonder,

The Child from Nine to Twelve Months.

Every thing in this world is progressive — the infant does not in a day become a man, nor does vigorous manhood sink at once into old age. The progress of decay is, however, in most cases more rapid than that of growth.

The infant cannot be seen to have altered from one day to another, though from week to week we think we can see a progression. Months present striking differences, and three months often seem to show him almost a new being.

It was during the period respecting which I am now to make some observations, that I begun to have the child occasionally present at family prayers. At first, as the different members of the family entered the room and took their seats, he looked with an eye of curiosity, especially at his old friends the domestics, whom he was not accustomed to see seated in the places they now occupied. Each person in turn read portions of the Scripture, and the baby soon began an imitation of the reading. This scene, however, soon became familiar and tiresome, especially as no one appeared to notice his performance. When the singing commenced, he was again interested, and, modulating his voice to the best of his ability, he sung too—looking grave, as he saw others did. During the prayer which followed, he again changed his tones of voice, in imitation of the sound he heard. When he grew weary of confinement, by

giving him something to hold in his hand, he was quiet until the close of the exercises. The presence of the baby, at first, might have diverted in some measure the attention of the younger members of the family, but it soon became familiar, and occasioned no disturbance.

I thought it important that the child should thus, from infancy, become accustomed to religious exercises. He did not indeed comprehend the import of the scene, the grave demeanor, the solemn music, and the subdued accents of prayer; but they made their impression upon his mind as well as his senses.

Outward expressions act upon the soul, as the affections of the soul produce external acts, and therefore it is that the tones, gestures, and expressions of countenance with which a child is conversant, have an important influence in the modification of its character. Accustomed to witness well-conducted family devotion, a feeling of awe and solemnity will become familiar, and when he is old enough to render an explanation proper, the idea of an invisible Creator and Benefactor, who is the object of this worship, will appear a natural and reasonable solution of the inquiry which will rise in his mind.

Curiosity begins to show itself very active in the child of ten months. My little boy sat by my side one day, playing with a box of wafers. He had already learned by observation, and memory recalled the fact, that there were sometimes things contained within such articles; he shook the box, and holding it to his ear listened to the sound as if to inform himself whether he might expect to find any thing within. Having satisfied himself on this point, he next went to work with great resolution to open the box, and at length succeeded in pulling out the bottom. His efforts were rewarded by a sight which made him utter cries of joy. Hundreds of bright round pieces fell about in glorious confusion. He had conquered a difficulty and had made a discovery. No botanist on finding a new plant, mineralogist at the sight of a rare specimen, or mathematician on the solution of a difficult problem, could feel

greater pleasure than was now apparent in this little miniature man, at the sight of the broken box and scattered wafers. The same curiosity or love of knowledge, leads us on from one difficulty to another in science; and should we ever reach a point beyond which there could be no discoveries, like Alexander, we should weep that there was nothing more to be conquered.

I was interested in observing the child's perplexity with respect to the effects of heat. In one of my apartments was a stove with doors, which had brass handles. He had by painful experience learned enough of the properties of fire to become cautious about exposing himself to it; and he knew that the iron stove was hot when there was fire within—but he had, by a series of observations, proved also that the brass handles and balls did not become hot like the iron. When there was not a large fire he could handle them with impunity; though even then he not unfrequently burnt his fingers in suffering them to venture upon the confines of danger. But he seldom cried when this happened during the course of his experiments upon the capacity of metals for caloric; he seemed to understand that it was at his own risk. Sometimes the stove contained fire enough to heat the handles of the door, without heating the balls; this was a matter of surprise to our young philosopher. And then again when the doors of the stove were open the iron part was cold. Before venturing to touch this, he would carefully examine the brass handles, and if they were cold, he at first lightly touched the other part, until gaining confidence, he seemed to feel great delight in taking firm hold of the formidable iron. I suffered him to make these trials even at the expense of a trifling hurt; (I always watched that it should be nothing more,) I wanted he should learn by his own experience to be careful; and yet even experience he found to be fallacious, since the metal that was hot yesterday was cold to-day.

Optics is a favorite study of little children, and its various phenomena excite in them much wonder. As soon as a child has learned to distinguish persons distinctly, he

will notice his own features in a mirror; but at first he does not think of it as connected with himself. He looks at it as he would at another child, he laughs, and the image laughs; he stretches out his hands, and the image does the same — at length he begins to comprehend the fact that his own motions are reflected; and he gesticulates as if for the purpose of seeing the effect in the mirror. From the image of his mother when she holds him before the glass, he turns to look at her person, thus showing that he knows the one to be an illusion. The polished andirons, reflecting on every side a miniature picture of himself, as he stands before them, afford an interesting subject for speculation; as he advances, the image becomes larger; he holds out his hand near the convex surface, and it looks larger than his whole body at a little distance. And when an andiron consists of parts in which the continuity of the convex surface is broken, he sees the images multiplied. Let any person observe an intelligent child of ten months, or a year old, and they will be struck with the extent of their observations, and apparent interest in things, which many grown persons never think of inquiring into, because they are accustomed to them. Shadows are among the optical phenomena which engage the attention of children. They ought to be made to understand that they are mere illusions. This can easily be done by showing them that their shadow on the wall is made by th mselves; that when they raise their hands, it produces a correspondent motion in the shadow, and when they run, the shadow runs. If a child is amused with seeing the rabbit on the wall open and shut its mouth, dart forward and then back, he should not be left with the impression that there was some real and mysterious being who thus appeared and disappeared; but by directing his attention to the hand and the motion of the fingers, he is let into the secret, and ready to laugh at the joke, instead of being left in that excited state of mind which makes him feel terrified at every unusual sight or sound.

Animals are regarded by very young children with great interest. The cat, the most domestic of all animals,

much as she has been traduced for the purpose of enhancing the value of her persecuting enemy, the dog, is usually kind to the baby. She suffers it to pull her by the ears, and the tail, and to pinch and choak her, with little resistance. There is something wonderful in this; for let another offer but a small portion of the indignity which puss will patiently receive from a child, she shows at once her resentment. But she may often be seen to go voluntarily and lay herself down by the side of her little tormentor, and to begin her gentle purring, as if to show her own good will to them. The sight of her always seems to excite pleasant feelings in the child, (for his injuries are not done with malice prepense,) and *tat, tat,* is among the first accents he is heard to utter. Some kittens being brought to my little boy, he contemplated them with much interest, but woe to the luckless creatures when they fell within the grasp of the little Hercules. Much as the child enjoyed his rough play with the kittens, I thought it wrong to indulge him in it, not only from pity to the animals, but because there was danger that he might acquire a habit of cruelty, even before he was capable of comprehending its nature.

One day, when the little boy was about eleven months old, I took him into a yard where a flock of turkeys were feeding. He eyed them with much satisfaction, until the cock-turkey, attracted by the child's scarlet frock came strutting up towards him, rustling his feathers with great force, and crying, gobble, gobble, as if in defiance. The little boy beheld the monster with mingled terror and admiration, drew himself closer to me, and looked in my face apparently to discover how I was affected at the strange sight. When I had driven Mr. Gobbler back, and the child saw that he was afraid to advance, he gathered courage and was disposed to pursue him. The recollection of this event was very lively in his mind for some time after, and when the turkey's gobble was repeated, the whole scene seemed to rise before him. It was to him, no doubt, the remembrance of a great victory.

Before eleven months, he began to show himself pleased with pictures, would point to small figures of men and animals, and turn over the leaves of a book as if to search for them. For the purpose of seeing how far he could comprehend, I made with a pen and ink, upon a piece of white paper, a circle of about an inch in diameter, and placed two dots for the eyes, a line for the nose, and another large one for the mouth. He had watched me while the delineation was going on, and when it was finished, looking at the grotesque figure, he laughed with great merriment, pointed to the spots for eyes, and the line for the mouth, as if he fully understood what they were intended to represent. According to an idea of Madame de Saussure, his imagination supplied what was wanting in the picture, and this exercise made the rude sketch more agreeable to him than the most perfect imitation.

The expression of the emotions of young children, when first viewing the grand scenery of nature, affords a rich treat to the penetrating observer. At eight months old, my child, on being carried to the door during a fall of snow, contemplated the scene with an appearance of deep attention. He had learned enough of the use of his eyes to form some conception of the expanse before him, and to perceive how different it was from the narrow confines of the apartments of the house. The falling snow, with its brilliant whiteness, and easy downward motion was strange and beautiful; and when he felt it lighting upon his face and hands, he held up his open mouth, as if he would test its nature by a third sense.

A few weeks after this, he was taken, on a bright winter's day, to ride in a sleigh. The sleigh-bells, the horses, the companions of his ride, the trees and shrubs loaded with their brilliant icy gems, the houses, and the people whom we passed, all by turns received his attention. If he could have described what he saw, as it appeared to him, and the various emotions caused by these objects, the description would have added a new page in the philosophy of mind. How often the beauties of nature are unheeded by man,

who, musing on past ills, brooding over the possible calamities of the future, building castles in the air, or wrapped up in his own self-love and self-importance, forgets to look abroad, or looks with a vacant stare. His outward senses are sealed, while a fermenting process may be going on in the passions within. But if, with a clear conscience, a love of nature, and a quick sense of the beautiful and sublime, we do contemplate the glorious objects so profusely scattered around us by a bountiful Creator, with the interesting changes which are constantly varying the aspect of these objects, still our emotions have become deadened by habit. We do not admire what is familiar to us, and therefore it is, that we must be ever ignorant of the true native sympathy between our own hearts and the external world.

The first fine day of spring, I carried my little boy into the open air. His senses were all awake, and when he felt the warm sun-shine, and saw the brightness which glowed in all directions around him, he was glad. As Mrs. Barbauld says, 'he was glad to be alive.' He looked upwards to the tall trees, and the glorious sun whose morning beams played among their branches; he surveyed the arched canopy of heaven, and then his ear caught the song of a bird who was building her nest on a spray at a little distance. Was there not poetry to his soul in all this? But before the child has acquired language in which to convey his impressions to the minds of others, these impressions have lost much of their vividness.

Every year by rendering us more familiar with nature, robs it of something of its poetry. Even in youth, we have lost much of the liveliness of the feeling of childhood; maturer years rob us of the enthusiasm of youth; and in old age, the emotions that once constituted the charms of existence, are scarcely remembered. But then our Maker designs that to these, shall succeed a new set of feelings, not indeed suggested by aught that 'eye hath seen, or ear heard,' but founded upon those invisible realities which are revealed by faith, to the soul of the Christian.

In the infant we have been observing the physical development in some respects had been more rapid than ordina-

ry. Before eleven months it had learned to walk. This is younger than is desirable, since a child is at this age more liable to fall, than when it has more judgment to balance itself. His attempts at language were imperfect, and his vocabulary consisted of a few words, and an imitation of the cries of some animals. The senses had served their 'apprenticeship' so far very faithfully. No child could arrive to this period with less of indisposition; yet it had been left to grow strong and hardy, unaccustomed to the excessive tenderness which is often deemed necessary to the preservation of an infant's life. During its first winter, which was a severe one, even for a northern climate, it scarcely had the appearance of a cold, though it was much of the time in an apartment where doors were being opened and shut very frequently, and which at the best was not a warm one. When I went from my own small and heated room into this, I often found the cold uncomfortable, and remonstrated with the nurse for suffering the child to remain in it. But I was at length convinced that he owed his fine health and exemption from colds to this habitual exposure to fresh air, and variation of temperature. I would remark, however, that the child's dress was warm, consisting of a pinning blanket, petticoat, and frock with long sleeves, all of flannel.

In order to sum up my observations upon the moral habits of children, I would remark,

1st. That education has great influence upon the *emotions*. Excessive indulgence renders children *selfish* and *obstinate*. By always regarding their slightest cries, we suffer them to acquire a domineering disposition, and fix in their hearts the love of power and tyranny. *Peevishness* may be produced by trifling with their feelings or teazing them; and *sullenness* may arise from too much sternness and severity. A mild, yet decided course may in general be expected to produce the happiest effect upon the disposition.

2d. Education gives an early bias to the *moral principles*, of which *truth* is the corner-stone. A child that is deceived, learns to deceive in its turn; and from this dispo-

sition originates the vice of lying. When you hold out something to a child to induce him to attempt to walk, and then withhold it from him, you sow in his mind the seed from whence will spring lies.

3d. The *religious education* of a child, may be begun when he is capable of distinguishing the look, tones, and postures of devotion from those which appear in the ordinary affairs of business or amusement. A child of a year old accustomed to hearing grace at table, will learn to sit quietly and with a serious look until this duty is performed, although hungry for his dinner.* I do not say that he will always do this; — there are times with children, as with grown people, when they are irritable and cannot bear restraint with a good grace.

All the *intellectual* faculties which distinguish man are seen in an active child of a year old. *Perception* is ever on the alert with him; if he hear the mewing of the cat, he looks after her that he may *perceive* her; if he hear a sound, he seeks to ascertain the cause of it. Perception has through the medium of *sensation* taught him a vast number of facts; and he is ever watching to gain new information by the same means. *Memory* recalls to him the objects of his perceptions, aided by his reflections. He weeps to see his mother go out with her bonnet on. This is because he remembers that she has been out before, and that he is happier when she is with him. Ask him where is papa, and he looks towards the place which he is accustomed to see him occupy. The faculty of *association* has connected the appellation, papa, with the person, and this again is connected with the idea of place. *Reason* has taught him to avoid the hot stove; *curiosity* is constantly leading him to new observations, and *imagination* shows itself in his interest in pictures and images.

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* I have seen one who wanted a few days of a year, cover his face with his hands, and remain in a fixed position at table, while his father invoked a blessing. He had, while thus young, learned to expect this observance and to look up to his father, as soon as the family were seated at table, as if waiting for him to commence. [Ed.]